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# THREE COLOURS OF TIME



# Three Colours of Time

*A novel of the life of Stendhal*

*By*

ANATOLI VINOGRADOV

*Translated from the Russian by*

GERARD SHELLEY

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## PART ONE

### CHAPTER ONE

EARLY ONE MORNING IN DECEMBER 1812 PRINCE SHIRKHANOV, A LIEUTENANT IN the Akhtyrsky Regiment, entered the office of General Arakcheyev's estate at Gruzino, in the province of Novgorod; he was carrying a small green morocco bag, the strings of which were secured with hanging wax seals. Admitted without delay into the General's villa, the Lieutenant handed the Count the packet, which bore the inscription "By order of His Majesty."

Three quarters of an hour later Arakcheyev, wheezing and coughing, summoned the messenger and speaking in nasal accents said to him : "I know, my dear, I know. The Tsar has told me. Only I'm not very good at reading even Russian, my friend, and these Frenchmen have filled their bag with such stuff that it would baffle the Devil himself. Anyway, take off your greatcoat, sit down and copy all this out. You won't get away from here to Petersburg until you've copied it out."

The Lieutenant submitted without a word, although the fierce Artillery General's order would shorten the time, already brief enough, which he was to spend with his people.

The bag turned out to contain some French reports of the Minister Daru and the Chief Commissary Dumas and a number of private letters, which, contrary to the regulations and apparently by favour, had got into this very important packet of the official Imperial post, intercepted by the Russian troops in the battle at Krasnoye on 5th November. The young man arranged the material according to its degree of importance, trimmed the goose quills and opened the iron ink-pot. No sooner had he begun to write than the General came in again.

After pacing up and down the room two or three times he turned to the Lieutenant and said : "Look here, young man, you don't know the regulations very well. You don't shout 'Attention !' while the soldiers are at the cookhouse. You've come here by order of His Majesty, and you stand to attention every time I enter the room. Well, then, don't forget. Begin with the paper in which the French prepare a revolt for us."

Having given the correct military answer, the Lieutenant spread out the rough draft of an enormous memorandum dealing with the extent to which a revolt of the peasant population against the landowners of Russia would help the success of French arms. From this document it appeared that even at the beginning of the war, immediately before Vitebsk, Napoleon had commissioned his most experienced political agents to find out to what extent the Russian peasantry was imbued with the revolutionary spirit. The memorandum put forward diametrically opposed opinions on this subject.

A certain Leven, the son of a manufacturer, a political agent of Napoleon, reported that the peasants could be influenced only in a few well-to-do regions, but that in general the oppressed and enslaved peasantry was not in a position "to listen to the voice of freedom and civilization resounding in the thunder of the victorious French guns."

This agent also made the wise observation that the peasants who were most

susceptible to the agitation of the French Jacobins were nothing but spies, who had been purposely left in the occupied districts by the Russian Government.

On the other hand, another French agent, whose name was not mentioned, spoke with great enthusiasm of the possibility of a general insurrection. He straightway referred to the four hundred and twenty-nine letters received by the various staffs and addressed to Napoleon. He described these scraps of paper—yellow and blue, with their uneven lines, in which a clerk's regular handwriting alternated with "the scrawl inherited from the seventeenth century." These letters spoke of how it was impossible to breathe in Russia, of how people were dying, in peace-time as in war—in whole families and villages, and of how the peasants were sold wholesale and retail like cattle; families were separated and incompatibles were brought together. Obscure individuals requested Buonaparte to fix a time and place, when they would appear before him as leaders of partisan detachments, if only he would abolish slavery. They promised to bring about a general insurrection. In two letters it was stated that the writers themselves, who had suffered unheard-of oppression, had not forgotten what they had seen in their young days beyond the Alps, where they had been sent with Suvorov's troops.

"The people there live better," they wrote. "And one breathes more freely there. Seemingly, not everywhere are there slaves."

The further the Lieutenant read, the more he felt as though the earth were slipping from beneath his feet and a sort of mist rising before his eyes. He remembered how his grandfather had whipped one of Suvorov's soldiers almost to death and handed him over to a penal battalion.

Arakcheyev came in once again, glanced contemptuously at the Lieutenant with his bleary eyes, paced up and down the room. Limping on his swollen foot and rubbing his hip with his hand, he said with a frown: "Look here, Prince, I've no time to stay here with you. You are not to go out of the room. When you have finished the memorandum, hand it over to Nastenka and I'll read it through." And without giving the Lieutenant time to reply he went out.

The Lieutenant, who was already at his fourth sheet of large-sized paper, hastily translated into sleek Russian phrases the heavy French locutions of the memorandum. Further on it appeared that all the suggestions had been rejected by Napoleon. Two of the authors of these letters had been summoned to the Staff of General Lavoisier and questioned by his aide-de-camp. The name of the aide-de-camp was not mentioned. It was merely stated that he was related to an "esteemed General," a Vendée counter-revolutionary. The French nobleman was indignant at the idea of a revolutionary spirit among the peasants and he took cruel revenge on them: both the Russian revolutionaries were executed.

The general attitude of the French Staff was such that the Emperor Napoleon was obliged to give up the idea of a peasant revolution in Russia. The memorandum clearly and definitely postulated the theory that "revolution and the overthrow of the landowners' yoke would not only fail to secure the success of French arms, but would make the very sojourn of foreign troops in Russia impossible." The opinions of the aides-de-camp of the General Staff were cited and most frequently of all those of the young General Count Philip de Ségur:

"There have already been examples of barbarian freedom in a barbarian people. It turned into unbridled licence. We have already had several instances of this of our own. The Russian nobles would have perished at the hands of

their slaves, as the colonists did at the hands of the negroes in San Domingo. His Majesty has seen fit to renounce the intention of instigating a movement which French policy would subsequently be unable to control, as it may also destroy beyond the borders of Russia the alliances of the governments and the ruling classes of the nations of Europe."

The same Count de Ségur wrote that "Russian priests, officers and nobles have managed to frighten the peasant masses with stories of terrible French atrocities, of poisoned utensils from which prisoners are fed, of diabolical crushing-machines which crush not only the body but the soul as well, thus condemning them to everlasting torments ; this agitation, designed by the Russian nobles as a counter-manceuvre against the Emperor Napoleon, has prevented him (Count de Ségur) from coming to an agreement with the rebel organizations." The memorandum described how the Russian landowners, retreating mile after mile, took their serfs with them into the heart of the country, destroying their humble dwellings and farms and leaving between them and the French huge expanses of fires, devastation and famine.

The memorandum explicitly noted that the fate of the entire working population of the country had been thrown into the scales as a war victim by the Russian nobles, that the peasant was just as much an enemy of the Russian noble as Napoleon was, that in fighting Napoleon the Russian Government strove at the same time to behead and annihilate the organization of its own serfs, who might begin with a hunger riot but would end by exterminating the landowners. The remarks of Count de Ségur were quoted : "This great decision of the Russian nobility is directed as much against Your Majesty's Government as against their own serfs, for this war of emperors and kings has already become a class war, a party war, a religious and national war. In short, it is no longer one war, but several wars waged simultaneously."

The Lieutenant did not very well understand what he read. His ideas of the French army did not harmonize at all with the official report about the Smolensk priest, who communicated to Napoleon a method of protecting churches against fire.

It appeared that in cases where the priests themselves did not set fire to the churches, relying on the vandalism of the French to do it for them, the victors did not even think of setting them ablaze. The Smolensk priest had not set fire to churches, but blamed the French for such fires as had occurred ; he had set up canteens in the churches and given shelter to the townsmen and refugee villagers, who had been deprived of their homes. In his sermons this priest had appealed to the population to remain calm and declared that the political quarrel of the two emperors ought not to embroil the peoples and that "the French did not kill babies at all, nor did they feed on human flesh, as the Archdeacon of Smolensk had asserted from the pulpit."

In the margin at this point the Lieutenant read a note written in lead pencil. The handwriting was familiar. Was it possible that the State Chancellor had managed to read this document ? "Search for this priest at the first opportunity and hand him over to the Commandant of the Peter and Paul fortress. To be deprived of holy orders."

The Lieutenant carefully wrote down : "Resolution of His Excellency the State Chancellor written in his own hand . . ." And then he reflected : "Is the Count having a little joke ? Ought I to translate the Chancellor's note into Russian or is that not allowed ?"

Just then a floor-board behind him creaked softly. He turned round.



Before him stood Nastenka, smiling, red-cheeked, in curling-papers and a huge Persian shawl.

"Well, my little Prince, have you just come from the army? It must have been terrible there when they were catching the French near Moscow?" she asked mincingly, speaking with ungrammatical haste.

This was the first time the Lieutenant had been to Gruzino. Released from active service through influence and appointed to deal with the secret portfolios of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on account of his discretion and knowledge of foreign languages, he had only just begun his new work. Now for the second or third time he was entrusted with the task of sorting out the correspondence captured from the French. The green morocco knapsack with the letter "N" and the laurel crown, which had been captured in the battle at Krasnoye as the result of intercepting the French communications, lay before him on the table, reminding him of the covered cart overturned in a wayside ditch, the frightened horses tearing at the harness, the Imperial courier in a racoon fur coat over his torn uniform, trying to hurl the knapsack as far away as possible into the wayside mud, and the slant-eyed Kalmyk Cossack cleaving the Frenchman's fur cap and skull with a ferocious blow. "It was all not so long ago," thought the Lieutenant. "Nobody knows what is going to happen later. And meanwhile here I am in this over-heated room with a red-cheeked, illiterate, crafty woman, whom it is impossible to offend with an uncivil word, to whom I have been told to hand over documents of the highest importance and whom one really doesn't know how to treat. And what a nuisance it is that the Emperor allowed that damned Arakcheyev to go to his estate for three days on account of illness—simply as the result of the usual quarrel, so they say. In two days he has worn out six couriers and as many horses."

Aloud he said: "Quite so, madame, I have just come from the army."

"Don't call me madame. I'm a simple woman and I love handsome officers. If you know how to please me, the Count will respect you."

So saying she quickly sat on the arm of the chair, made the Lieutenant sit down and placing her hand on his shoulder said: "Now, read to me what all this writing is about."

## CHAPTER TWO

AFTER LOOKING QUICKLY THROUGH THE DOCUMENTS, THE LIEUTENANT PAUSED AT random over a large greenish sheet of paper and began to read:

*Moscow, 15th October, 1812.*

To monsieur Rousse, senior secretary of monsieur Deloche, notary, rue Helvétie, No. 57, Paris.

Have you not by chance, sir, some news of Madame Baskova? On the day we entered Moscow I considered it necessary to leave my post. I ran along the Moscow streets, anxiously penetrating into the burning houses and trying in vain to discover Baskova. I did not find her. It was only three or four days later when, meeting by chance an acquaintance of mine, namely the harpist Auguste Fessel, I learnt from him that she had left for St. Petersburg shortly before our entry, that her departure had led to an almost complete rupture with her husband, that she was pregnant and wearing green spectacles owing to eye trouble, that her husband, an

ugly dwarf and a sentimental spouse, was ferociously jealous. Fessel also told me that he thought Baskova was short of money and had only enough for her journey to France. He said that Baskov himself was an ugly fellow and by no means as rich as he was said to be. Alas, all this information is not very consoling! However, perhaps Fessel himself has a grudge against Baskov. I thought that my friendship with you and our interest in Baskova obliged me to gather this cheerless information. It is difficult to imagine a more impassable distance than that between Petersburg and Moscow in these days. If she has managed to traverse it, a fresh journey from Petersburg to Paris will be beyond her strength, and I think she will remain in St. Petersburg. But what will she do about her husband and what fate will overtake him amidst all the present perturbations? Probably you will learn all about this much sooner than I. Will you be so good, in the event of your getting any news, as to let me know? And if she comes to Paris, let her go straight to my apartment at No. 3, rue Neuve du Luxembourg. How delighted I should be then! Will you be so good as to inform her of all this and help her to settle in my place? As regards the enclosed letters, you must do me a favour and deliver them to Maréchal (Hotel Elbeuf, Place du Carrousel). He is Count Daru's private secretary.

Forgive me the blots and bad handwriting, I am writing to you long after midnight, I am in a terrible hurry and keep tearing myself away from this letter, dictating at the same time business papers to fifty-five army clerks by the light of a tallow candle-end in the Kremlin Palace. Receive the assurance of my exceptional respect for you.

HENRI BEYLE.

P.S. I should like Madame Maurice, the concierge of No. 3, rue Neuve du Luxembourg, to open my apartment for Baskova, who will become the mistress there, if she finds the place suitable.

Having read the letter, the young man tried to free his shoulder with a cautious movement, but Nastenka's hand held him firmly.

"O these Frenchmen! He seems to have come to Moscow to look for his Mélanie. What a joke—he was looking for a needle in a haystack!" said Nastenka, as though not noticing the Lieutenant's movement.

Shirkhanov felt more and more uncomfortable. After quickly throwing her arms round his neck and giving him a kiss on the cheek, Nastenka jumped off the armchair and went out.

Recovering from his embarrassment and not knowing what to think, the Lieutenant was perplexed and compared his present sensation with his recent experiences. His sensation was akin to the shame one felt after inevitable retreat before the foe, or to that vague anxiety a soldier feels when he finds himself in an unfamiliar locality. Having twirled his slender fair moustache and smoothed out the papers lying before him, he wondered how all this batch could have got into one bag. The memorandum on the preparation of an insurrection could not be sent by the Smolensk route together with private letters like the one he had read. Therefore in drawing up the list he would have to put this material apart.

He knew that all the intercepted French post was sent by His Majesty's orders to General Arakcheyev for inspection. At the same time he had heard of the Staff's intrigues in Petersburg in connection with the passing of this correspondence through the hands of the State Chancellor's officials. He

marvelled at the extraordinary carelessness of such an old-timer as Arakcheyev. He regretted he had not thought betimes to ask how such reports usually went through with the Count. At present this three days' detention coupled with the unexpected interference of a serf mistress in political matters appeared to him in very gloomy colours. Obviously all that had occurred was merely due to the fact that Arakcheyev chanced to be staying at Gruzino, and it would certainly not have happened in Petersburg.

It was already long after midday. The Lieutenant was feeling hungry, his eyes were tired from so much reading. Trying not to make a noise, quietly jingling his spurs, he paced up and down the room annoyed by the creaking of the long floor-boards. Outside the windows the hoar-frosted trees spread their melancholy outlines against the background of the greyish-red sky. The red globe of the sun peeped through the pall of clouds. The Lieutenant's thoughts were far away. He pictured to himself the streets of Paris, which he had seen three years ago, when there was no talk of war with France. He remembered the artist Tarchini, the tenor of the Paris Opera, ill and weak. He was found in Moscow after the departure of the French. Three years ago the Lieutenant had heard Tarchini in Paris. Apparently he had joined the permanent opera troupe, that accompanied Napoleon's staff and was with him in Moscow. "But why am I thinking of this? Why, of course, it was a name mentioned in one of the letters lying on the table." The Lieutenant took up the letter. The similarity of the ideas and phrases made him wonder, and the further he read the more he was struck by the likeness of the handwriting to that of the letter which he had read aloud at the unexpected request of Nastasia. Without reading the letter through, he glanced at the signature. Instead of *Henri Beyle* it was signed *Souchevort*, yet there could be absolutely no doubt that both letters were written by the same man.

"Obviously he is a secret agent," thought the Lieutenant, "or I know nothing of handwriting. It's very odd, in any case, that the same man should call himself by different names in letters of an absolutely private nature."

Being interested in the mystery, he examined the correspondence further. Here was the last letter—a wretched old bill folded in four on which the ink had run. On the envelope bearing the Commissary's seal of the "Grande Armée" was the inscription: "To monsieur Chérubin Beyle. Rue Bonne. Grenoble."

The young man read:

I must avail myself of this rare opportunity, dear father, to write you a letter from this place. I received the express letter from monsieur Jules informing me of the correspondence with you. Please expedite the course of these affairs so as to achieve at least a small success to compensate for the enormous expenditure of energy and the extreme fatigue which has weighed on me since the day of my departure from Moscow, the 16th of October. In leaving I lost all my property, all my provisions; for eighteen days I lived on the soldier's wearisome ration of bread and water, which nevertheless cost me four francs. The greater part of the army was supplied with provisions. If my letters have reached you, you will know that I have now been appointed Chief Director of Army Supply. In this office, I enjoy complete freedom of movement. To-morrow I am going to Orsha, on the way to Minsk. I shall be eighteen miles in the rear of the army. I am quite well, but worn out and dying of fatigue. If His Majesty makes

me a baron, the title will have been well earned. Gaétan is tired, but is well, like myself. A thousand greetings to all our family.

The letter was written in the same handwriting. It was addressed to Monsieur Beyle, and signed : *Charles Chaumette*.

Who was this strange man, Beyle, Souchevort or Chaumette ?

A certain Chaumette figured in the lists of the French Minister of Foreign Affairs. But the letter was addressed to Beyle.

Why, of course, that was the Frenchman's real name, but the other Chaumette spelt his name differently and was now apparently living in the Balkans.

"I am in duty bound to give an explanation of the whole affair to the authorities," the Lieutenant thought. "But what explanation can there be ? If I merely state that they are private letters and have no great importance for the Count, he will probably say to me : 'How is it you did not recognize the French Chief Commissary of Supply ? If he has many false names, he must have been in the secret service or, what is worse, a Freemason or a Martinist, like Verestchagin, of whom Rastopchin had reported and who had raised a revolt in Moscow.'"

The Lieutenant's thoughts were confused. Among all the difficulties connected with his new service, the necessity of divining the thoughts of his superiors worried and tortured him more than anything else. He was annoyed with his aunt for having had recourse to patronage and taking him out of active service for this office job. It had all been done so that pretty Natasha Shcherbakova, his fiancée, would not feel lonely and bored. As soon as the war was over, they would go away to the country, get married in the village church and settle down to a quiet life. But at present he had to go on working and working.

Copying out one document after another, he made rough notes, and against documents No. 214 and No. 215 he wrote : "Private letters of the Chief Commissary of the Smolensk District, Henri Beyle, official and Commissaire de Guerre. The said Beyle is apparently attached to Napoleon Buonaparte's Minister-Secretary for secret commissions and for this reason carries on his correspondence in various names, as appears from the similarity of the correspondence and from the signatures of the said Beyle, as well as from the fact that while writing under the name of Chaumette to one, Chérubin Beyle, he nevertheless addresses him as father."

An old man, his breast adorned with crosses and medals and wearing felt boots and a shabby uniform, entered the room.

"His Excellency has given orders that Your Excellency is to have a meal," he said and, having quickly covered a small table nearby with a napkin, went out. A minute later he returned, bearing on a tray a salmon, pickled gherkins, steaming ukhá (fish soup) and a carafe of spiced vodka. The Lieutenant needed no persuasion.

"I have been ordered to leave the vodka for Your Excellency," said Arakcheyev's manservant, when he came in again to clear the table.

"What is your name ?" the Lieutenant asked him.

"Fedorov, Your Excellency," said the old man, drawing himself up and looking the Lieutenant straight in the face in a soldierly manner.

"Look here, Fedorov, report to the General about me when he returns."

"I have not been ordered to report about anybody, Your Excellency."

"But hasn't the General gone away ?"

"No, Your Excellency."

"Is he in his own room?"

"No, Your Excellency."

A cunning expression flitted across the old man's face.

The young Prince again felt uncomfortable in this strange isolated house of Arakcheyev's. He had never attached any importance to the stories he had heard in the regiment about the Artillery General's mode of life. Only one thing struck him : the Tsar Alexander's strange partiality, which was not in keeping with his character, for this obstinate and tetchy old-timer with the nasal voice, pointed red moustaches and bleary eyes like buttons. The General strove to imitate Suvorov by his studied simplicity and absence of display. The Lieutenant recalled how once in the suite of Alexander I among the magnificent toilettes and bright uniforms Arakcheyev had been conspicuous, and intentionally so, in his grey tunic, more suitable to a preceptor of the Cadet Corps than to the powerful inspector of artillery and one of the Tsar's favourites. There were no decorations on his grey tunic except an oval portrait of Paul I on enamel and surrounded with diamonds. A subtle policy ! The "modesty without flattery" of the devoted general and the portrait of Paul I was a perpetual reminder to Tsar Alexander Pavlovich that the father had been murdered with the tacit consent of his son.

All these thoughts flashed through the Lieutenant's mind. Three glasses of vodka had befuddled him, as he was not accustomed to strong drink. He went up to the window and looked at the inner yard of Arakcheyev's country house. A stableman was grooming the horses. These were Arakcheyev's three best horses. Small but strong, they were neighing and playfully biting each other's withers. Creeping almost under the belly of a horse, the stableman took its foot between his knees and cleaned the hoof with a brush. Evidently somebody was about to go on a journey. A small kибитка was standing in the middle of the yard, but the gates were still shut. It was growing dusk ; the room had been getting dark for some time. Work was impossible. You could not make out a single letter. Leaving the papers on the table, the Lieutenant went out of the room, walked along the corridor and softly called Fedorov. No answer came. He went farther along to where he thought the servants' quarters must be, pushed open a door and entered a lobby. The next door, covered with felt, was also unlocked. Lifting the latch, he found himself in clouds of snow dust and went out into the garden. After the confused and tiring impressions of the last few days and especially after the perplexities occasioned by the strange mode of life at Gruzino, Shirkhanov rested, standing hatless and inhaling the frosty air with pleasure. Going along a snow-sprinkled path, he looked around. He was astonished—so meagre and ramshackle was the whole arrangement of the Count's homestead. The buildings were low, rectangular, stuccoed and painted pink ; the windows were without external frames ; everything was arranged in a line : the garden paths were so narrow that only one person could walk along them.

Shirkhanov walked quietly. The snow deadened his spurs.

Past a clumsy vase on a low pedestal he went through the garden and again returned to the lobby. At the door he heard this conversation round the corner :

"And if you won't consent, Nastasia Fedorovna will order you to be flogged in the cellar like last week. Sixty strokes with the knout, and this time you may get the whole seventy."

"Have pity, Vassili Kirillovich, I can't !"

"If you can't, then you'll get what I said."

The crunching of jack-boots on the snow put a stop to the conversation. The Lieutenant entered the room again. Two large candlesticks with candles were already lighted on the table. A plate of pretzels had been placed beside the carafe of vodka. Prince Shirkhanov sat down to work. He wrote a long time and, forgetting all about prudence, frequently reached out for the carafe of vodka.

Feeling tired, he drank several glasses one after the other and laid his head wearily on the table. The lines of the letter in French danced before his eyes. Having trimmed the pen with great difficulty, he went on with the translation :

DEAR MADAME,

Allow me to express my delight at your news that little Aline and little Napoleon have bought for their amusement some magnificent guinea-pigs ; all Moscow is talking about this piece of news from Paris ! I should have liked, of course, to congratulate the children personally on their acquisition, firstly, because I myself was one of the inhabitants of the château de Bécheville, which is dear to my heart, and secondly, for the reason that by the time you receive my letter the children and yourself will probably be lamenting the death of the magnificent little creatures. The pigs, or rather hogs, among whom I am now living, are creatures of a quite different nature. With the exception of two or three companions, the rest are only capable of talking about the most weighty subjects with an air of great seriousness, and complicating questions which do not require more than ten minutes' consideration. Everything however is going fairly smoothly. We are completely deprived of feminine society, that is, since the time when we last came in contact with the Polish postwomen. We console ourselves with the fact that we have become expert fire brigades. If you only knew how comical we looked dashing at lightning speed out of the burning houses into the quarters unaffected by the fire the first nights after our entry into Moscow ! For you, madame, this is hardly great news : probably in Paris there is so much talk about these events that you can see the picture of burning Moscow as well as we can. You probably know from the couriers who bring your letters that Moscow—a city hitherto unknown to Europe—had six or even eight hundred palaces, the beauty of which surpasses anything that Paris knows. Everything was designed for a life of the greatest luxury. The splendour and elegance of the houses, the fresh colours, the best English furniture embellishing the rooms, the elegant mirrors, the charming carpets, the divans of the most varied shapes ! There were no rooms in which one could not accommodate oneself in four or five different ways, each of which would give the inhabitant every convenience and the most fascinating comfort combined with perfect elegance. Only my happy and beloved Italy with its ancient palaces produced the like impression upon me. But the origin of this Moscow refinement is quite different. The Russian government is a peculiar brand of oriental despotism. The upper ruling class—eight hundred or a thousand persons—has a yearly income of from five hundred thousand to one and a half million francs and hundreds of thousands of slaves. What can they do with such wealth ? Serve at the Court ? A certain sergeant of the Guards, who became a favourite of the Emperor, humiliated his own nobles and sent aristocrats to Siberia merely in order to confiscate for his own benefit the beautiful horses and remarkable

carriages belonging to the exiles. In this unfortunate whirligig of events, *on the uncertain and shifting ground of the Court, people try to find their happiness. And if one judges by their palaces, in which we live in turns, thirty-six hours at most in each, one can see that their owners hastened to take everything they could as quickly as possible from this rapid flux of events at Court.* For them the loose living of the Imperial Court had been a gift from fate. Catherine alone had managed to give names to fourteen distinguished Russian noblemen. And the present Count Saltykov, in whose house our kinsman, Marshal Daru, is now staying, is a real, authentic, actual cousin of the Emperor Alexander who is fighting us.

You see from this that the Emperor who is at war with us is no other than citizen Saltykov : Alexander Saltykov ! And now with the shifting of their fortune the owners of these elegant palaces have themselves been shifted to the lower grades. How quickly the loss of outward prosperity plunges people, outwardly so nice and elegant, into horrifying and repulsive barbarism ! I assure you, dear madame, that you would no longer recognize your so amiable Russian friends of not long ago. Do you remember a certain handsome man, Apollo, as you called him when you danced with him last winter ? Do you know I have just seen this handsome Apollo behave like a real villain, insulting two women and three little children, the eldest of whom was a little girl of seven, who followed him in tears about the room ?

When shall I be in Vienna again at last, in the drawing-room of the Duchess Louisa, far from all these disgusting savages ? Looking forward to this happiness, I am leaving to-morrow for Smolensk, where I have been appointed Director-General of Army Supply. Hear me, O God, and grant that I may find myself once again at No. 3, rue Neuve du Luxembourg, which is only three and a half hours distant from Bécheville. Are you still living in the château de Bécheville ? I remember your intention was not to leave it save in dire necessity. Do you remember what wonderful grapes were served at your table ? This evening General Van Dedem, a very amiable man, sent monsieur Daru a small grape vine in a flower pot. This little plant had three bunches of grapes, a couple of leaves and five or six tendrils. It was a symbol of our frugality. Monsieur Daru, gay and courteous as always, wished all of us to taste the grapes. The wretched berries tasted like vinegar. It was all very sad.

In my spare time I wander about in search of distractions. These are not to be found here, so I am constantly thinking about France. Be so good, dear madame, as to give my regards to Prince de Plaisance. I think he has already returned from Beauce. For some reason it seems to me that Madame N. is with you at present. Please give her my greetings. I suppose there will be no other way of sending my greetings to mademoiselle de Camelin and Pauline : I should like to ask them to remember me, a poor wanderer, on whose devoted sentiments you, madame, may fully rely. Well, there it is ! It seems there is nothing new. General Dumas treats all his subordinates excellently.

HENRI BEYLE.

Kremlin, 16th October, 1812.

Just as he finished writing the last line, the Lieutenant noticed that the guttering candle was dripping on to the paper. Taking out the snuffers, and

a pair of scissors from a metal box, he clipped the wicks and trimmed the candles. Outside it was pitch dark. It was still long before dawn, and the longest candle was no longer than the third tail of his aide-de-camp's shoulder-strap. Nevertheless the young man decided not to go to sleep and boldly tackled the remaining spiced vodka in the carafe. He realized with annoyance that sleep was more and more getting a grip on him. The words "the Emperor who is at war with us is no other than citizen Saltykov" struck him as being an unheard-of piece of impudence.

"Yes, this is a very important secret document," he thought. "I'd like to meet this French pen-pusher, the *muscadin*! I'd show him how to slander and make fun of the lawful representatives of authority. It is plain, of course, that when some Napoleon of no family upsets Europe and overthrows the lawful rulers, any Beyle can get into the habit of blasphemously insulting the Lord's Anointed."

The Lieutenant of the Akhtyrsky Regiment of Hussars unbuttoned his sky-blue uniform and tried to take a few steps up and down the room. His spurs jingled with an uncertain sound and, scratching the floor-boards with his heels, he tumbled on to a leather divan. Confused visions passed through his mind—the wings of a huge balloon, which he had seen over Moscow just before the entry of the French. Rastopchin had prepared this monster balloon under the direction of a certain German artillery officer and a couple of pyrotechnists. It was his idea that this enormous balloon with mechanical wings should soar above the French troops, its movements controlled by a hero chosen by lot who was to hurl a shower of fire and iron from the suspended basket on to the French soldiers. A huge number of rockets had already been prepared. The balloon went up, but the manœuvres with the wings were not successful. The balloon burst into flames and the experiment had to be abandoned.

But now, in his sleep, the experiment succeeded splendidly. Thousands of sharp steel arrows rained down upon the French army, leaving behind them fiery traces like the tails of a comet. And now he, the Lieutenant, was steering the wings, trying to overtake the damned Frenchman Beyle and to break his head for his impudent words. ". . . Saltykov, Saltykov," throbbed in his ears. However, the Empress Catherine was by no means a chaste Diana. Otherwise would she have come like that, in her chemise, into the room of an officer? Anyway, they were talking nonsense when they said she was old. She had rosy cheeks and supple shoulders and kissed ardently. True, a lieutenant of no mean family nevertheless whispered into her ear quite disrespectful but very ardent words and persuaded her that he "was not Saltykov at all" and that "she had no need whatever to choose for herself such a monster with sticking-out ears, a red nose, bleary eyes and a husky voice." Ardently embracing her, he tried to persuade her to go away with him, as she would come to no good if she stayed on this estate. She closed his mouth with her hand and whispered something in his ear. What it was he could not make out. He only knew that she kept whispering something a long time. Then followed a protracted and incomprehensible interval. . . .

Raising his head with difficulty and opening his eyes, the Lieutenant heard the floor-boards creak under bare feet and the door close behind a departing woman. Coming to his senses, the officer sprang up from the divan. A huge volume of army regulations had lain under his head instead of a pillow, and beside the divan lay a small lace cap.



The sun had not yet risen. Shaking his head, the Lieutenant tried to remember and realize what had happened to him and where he was. In the course of his few army carouses he had more than once made a promise not to drink. How had all this happened to him? And what, in fact, had happened? He bent down, picked up the cap and hurriedly thrust it into the green morocco knapsack.

Desperate cries resounded in the yard. Two lads were sitting on the head and legs of a man stretched out on a board, while a third was lashing his back with a cat-o'-nine-tails. The cries soon stopped, breaking off suddenly, and the Lieutenant was more than ever surprised at the quiet efficiency of the landowner's punishment. A minute later the hand that had lifted the whip was lowered. The executioner went away, quietly and lazily swinging his hand with the whip hanging from the wrist. The two youths who had assisted at the flogging got up just as unconcernedly and lazily, without malice and without regret. Bending towards the window, the Lieutenant saw ordinary Russian faces: a beardless lad, a fair head without a cap, and a stocky dark man with a flabby, kind-hearted face. The Lieutenant recollected what he had read the previous night.

These aspects were altogether new to him. Neither in the School of Pages nor in the regiment had he heard anything of the sort: palaces of the "fortunate thousand," and the masses like the four men he now saw before his eyes.

And as though in answer to these thoughts there came from a neighbouring window a capricious feminine voice: "Vanka, Nastasia Fedorovna has ordered Fedot to rub the whipped man's back with salt."

### CHAPTER THREE

IN SPITE OF GENERAL ARAKCHYEV'S SUPPOSITIONS SHIRKCHANOV FINISHED THE work by noon on the following day and expected the ferocious General to let him go to Petersburg immediately.

He wrote out a rather hazy "report" on the documents delivered to His Excellency, hoping he would be able to come to a definite conclusion on the basis of the Count's verbal instructions. He was already picturing to himself his meeting with Natasha in Petersburg in a small house beside the bridge near the Kronverksky Park, where she was spending the last week with his aunt before leaving for the province of Voronezh. His aunt, having settled him in what she thought was a good position, was hastily preparing to go to her house in the country without passing through the devastated neighbourhood of Moscow.

Footsteps were heard in the next room and Arakcheyev's grating voice resounded: "Put Fedotka in the Edikulem. Nastasia Fedorovna herself saw him peep through the window at the Lieutenant's work."

So saying the General entered the room and went up to Shirkhanov's table.

"Well, how are you getting on, Prince?" he asked affably.

"I have the honour to report to Your Excellency that I have now completed the investigation, with which I was entrusted, of the intercepted French private and official papers delivered by His Majesty's orders to Your Excellency for inspection."

"Ah, smart fellow, smart fellow! It was not for nothing they told me

yesterday that you were very good at foreign languages. Give me your report in the proper order."

"May I ask a question, Your Excellency?"

"Well, what is it?"

"Do you wish me to begin with the private or the Staff papers, Your Excellency?"

"What's in the private papers?"

"Apart from the letters of the commissariat officer Beyle addressed to the wife of the French Minister Daru, to his father and to his friends, which letters the said Beyle signs with different names, there are no other private papers in the French bag. However this Commissary speaks with extraordinary insolence of the person of His Majesty, the Autocrat of Russia."

"So, so," replied Arakcheyev without any indignation, even with a complete indifference which astonished Shirkhanov.

The Lieutenant wanted to continue the report in order to show off his cleverness in understanding this man Beyle with the many names. But glancing at Arakcheyev's face, he realized that it would be a waste of time. Arakcheyev attached no importance to his youthful zeal. He therefore began to give an account of the reports of the Chief Commissary of the French Army, General Dumas.

Arakcheyev listened attentively, making remarks from time to time in a nasal voice: "To-day is 5th December. Surely that fool Chichagov won't let Buonaparte slip through a second time at Molodeczno as he did on the Berezina in November?"

The Lieutenant read the reports of the Chief Commissary of the French army which said that Smolensk and Vilna abounded in supplies, that Lithuania and northern Poland were able to give enough supplies to keep the army's rear in good condition and that the only thing that needed to be done was to see that His Majesty's Generals did not disturb communications as the result of personal quarrels, for by sacrificing thousands of French citizens because of their unwillingness to help a rival on a neighbouring sector, they would destroy all possibility of a regular system of supply for the vanguard of the French army.

As he read, the Lieutenant reflected how great were the anxieties regarding the feeding of the miserable remnant of the French army along the path of its retreat.

"So, so," remarked Arakcheyev. "If they had stayed a year in Smolensk instead of marching on Moscow, it would have been a death-blow to us!"

Then suddenly realizing that a junior officer was listening to him, he raised his clenched left fist from the table, went away, sat down on the divan and continued to listen in silence. After reading the report and his comments on the Commissary's affairs connected with it, the Lieutenant gave an account of the very secret French document concerning the help French arms hoped to obtain by the organization of an insurrection of the peasants against the landowners.

Arakcheyev's ugly face became covered with blue and purple spots, his ears grew even redder, but his leaden eyes suddenly lit up with such malicious joy that the Lieutenant almost stammered as he read the document. All of a sudden Arakcheyev burst out, speaking to no one in particular but clenching his fist and nervously pulling at his sword-knot:

"Aha, I said that lop-eared seminarist wasn't busy with the Code Napoleon for nothing, that Speransky wasn't occupied with this rebellion for nothing!"

Now I catch him at it again ! Let the dog know whose meat he has eaten ! You see what he has been up to ! These are his intrigues ! It was he who whispered to the Emperor 'to stay constantly with the army.' If it hadn't been for Shishkov and Balashov, and if it hadn't been for me, his faithful and devoted slave Arakcheyev, it would have been all up with him. Go to the army, Little Father Tsar, and we in Petersburg will sit as a Jacobin cabinet. That's what comes of putting trust in a man of another class rather than in the nobility. Exile isn't good enough for him—he'll get hard labour as well ! Who's the smart fellow ? The smart fellow is Arakcheyev ! I dared to send a message to the foot of the Throne. The fate of the army is not the fate of the Tsar, but the Tsar is everything even without the army. And that's why the Emperor with imperial grace, has seen fit to punish me !"

Then he suddenly stopped talking and fixing his dull leaden eyes on the Lieutenant, said in a low, threatening voice :

"Listen, young man, this is what I've got to say to you : don't wag your tongue with strangers but stick to your job. One word too much and you're done for ! You'll never get out of soldiering all your lifetime. I'll send you right out to Baikal."

Then making notes and observations on all the copies regardless of any rules of orthography, he said to the Lieutenant :

"Don't you dare to go in the post kbitka. You will go to Petersburg in two stages by post-chaise, as directed."

And without giving the Lieutenant time to collect his thoughts, Arakcheyev went out of the room.

Prince Shirkhanov hastily gathered up the documents and thrust them into the knapsack. Before he was able to fasten the strap, the spurs of a non-commissioned officer jingled, the door from the next room opened and a moustachioed courier, giving the salute, shouted :

"I have the honour to present myself, Your Worship !"

The Lieutenant went out after him without correcting his form of address and got into the kbitka. The courier, tapping his boots with his sword and shaking off the snow, took his seat beside the coachman.

A shout resounded and the horses, setting off harmoniously, were quickly dashing over the snow-covered road.

## CHAPTER FOUR

WHILE THE INEXPERIENCED LIEUTENANT, PRINCE SHIRKhanov, WHO HAD DRIVEN to Petersburg with the courier, was confined in the Commandant's guard-room as the result of a secret letter from Arakcheyev to the Commandant delivered by the same courier, and while he was wondering about the reasons for his mysterious arrest, events of a quite different order were taking place in the town of Vilna, some four hundred miles away from Petersburg.

Through the streets, where fires made of veritable mountains of horse dung were burning, along the ruts and hollows from Ostraya Brama to the Kovno Gates moved endless columns of sledges, carriages, kbitkas and wagons. On the wall of the Litovski Castle was pasted up a leaflet that had been issued by the Provisional Government appointed by the French.

It was printed in large letters in Polish and French :

Two combined Russian armies : the Moldavian of General Chichagov and the army of General Wittgenstein, were defeated by the French troops at Borisovo on the Berezina on 28th November.

The Great Army captured in this battle twelve cannon, eight flags and standards, and also from nine to ten thousand prisoners.

The Duke of Neufchâtel's aide-de-camp—Baron Montesquiou—has just passed hurriedly through our city.

He is on his way to Paris.

His Imperial Majesty Napoleon is in excellent health.

In spite of this reassuring news, which was in sharp contradiction to reality, the inhabitants of the city, feeling that a disaster had taken place, looked with alarm at the endless stream of men, horses, carriages, cannon, wagons, hastening towards the west. Notwithstanding the fact that four streets led from the city to the Kovno road, all these countless waves, merging into a single flood, strove to pass through the Kovno Gates alone. By the small Jewish hovels at the cross-roads were mountains of broken vehicles. Shafts thrust through wheels were uplifted like arms ; clumsy army fourgons on wheels, a kibitka smashed by a cannon, and next to it a horse with a broken leg blocked the road. On the other side of the street a small house with a fence was almost swept away by this flood. The same stream flowed through the inner yard, breaking down fences and cutting through the quarter in a winding channel that emerged on the same Kovno road.

It was the ninth day after Napoleon's fantastic crossing of the Berezina, the day when, surrounded by his Ministers, he ordered all the documents of the army to be destroyed, recognized his cause as lost and dashed off to Paris.

In the morning of 7th December, Henri Beyle, whose letters Arakcheyev had examined with insufficient attention two days before, entered the café Olivieri with his cousin Gaétan Gagnon. Taking off his sheep-skin coat and throwing it on to the window-sill near a small wooden table, Beyle ordered coffee and an abundant luncheon. Once fairly thick-set and broad-shouldered, Henri Beyle, who had taken part in Napoleon's Italian campaigns, was now thin and shapely. His features had become sharper and bore traces of great physical suffering, and only his eyes—cold, intelligent and of a rather unusual blue—were keen and penetrating. His narrow, curly side-whiskers came down to his chin.

"Listen, Henri, I can't go any farther. I'm absolutely knocked up and I'm going to stay in Vilna," said Gaétan.

"As you please," replied Beyle. "Only I don't advise you to stay here more than three days and I won't guarantee even three."

"Yes, but Vilna is supplied with provisions for an army of one hundred thousand for three months. Jomini told me so to-day."

"You forget that these hundred thousand do not exist either in Vilna, or in the whole army. The remnants of the troops are so small that they won't consume the Vilna provisions in three years and won't even be able to defend their stores."

"But Maret has brought an order to the King of Naples to remain a week in the city, assemble all the forces and wait for reinforcements, which the Emperor is going to send from Warsaw."

"I don't believe in the reinforcements from Warsaw nor in the new recruitment of three hundred thousand men. In France all business has come to a standstill, the North has stopped producing textiles ; we shall have nothing to clothe the soldiers with."

"The condition must be general. Yesterday I glanced through the local newspapers. The *Minsk Chronicle* and the *Lithuanian Courier* are full of reports of workers' riots in England. In a series of districts the weavers have revolted and smashed the looms, and in London itself there have been bloody happenings : thirty thousand soldiers and the police have put down the rebels. Some poet—Lord Byron—has taken up their defence."

Beyle made no reply. He looked out of the window and took pleasure in the quiet side-street of the Jewish quarter, where there was no noise, no shouting, no disorderly and wild stream of men gripped by animal fear. He passed his left hand over his chin as though wishing to make sure how well he had managed to shave himself that morning, and recalled with a smile the amazement of the Minister Daru at the fact that even on the difficult day of the crossing of the Berezina "his cousin Beyle had not forgotten to shave himself." Listening to Gaétan, he thought of those who had not succeeded in crossing the Berezina. Where were they now ? The Emperor had been in a hurry and left all to the mercy of fate, and only a small detachment of Neapolitan riflemen with Grand Maréchal du Palais Duroc and the aide-de-camp Mouton escorted an open kibitka. In the kibitka were mameluke Rustan and the officer Vonsovich, an interpreter. There were twenty-eight degrees of frost. The ice held. The Neapolitan cavalymen took the hill on the opposite bank at the trot.

Why the Neapolitans ?—thought Beyle. But here too in Vilna Italian troops are passing through, shivering with cold and their eyes gleaming. Quite so : Joachim Murat was King of Naples. The Emperor Napoleon was a Corsican ; but the proprietor of this café, Olivieri, who stared so hard at Gaétan as he ate, and whose face spread into an ingratiating inconsequential smile as soon as his eyes met yours . . . who was he ? He too was obviously an Italian, thought Beyle, and he addressed him in French :

"Have you been long in this city, my friend ?"

Olivieri came up to the table and whispered : "Monsieur Beyle is aware, of course, that His Majesty passed safely by the outskirts of the city yesterday evening, stopped at Pogulianka and has now arrived at Wilkowszki."

"How do you know me ?"

"I was living in Milan. You were staying at my aunt's, near the Cathedral Square, in September last year. And, if you remember, I took your letters to Signora Pietragrua."

Anxious to drive away the unpleasant recollections which arose at the mention of the name of the woman who had mocked him so cruelly, Beyle turned to the Italian abruptly and asked : "But what are you doing here, citizen ?"

"I am in the service of the French Emperor. I was under the orders of Captain Weiss, an officer of the Galician-French squadron of guides. It was he who gave me the money to open the café."

Beyle did not ask any further questions. He watched the birds, freezing to death as they flew, fall on to the pavements, and after the long days of unbearable physical suffering from cold and hunger, he enjoyed sipping the hot coffee in the warm room. Gaétan, having had lunch, leaned against the back of the chair and fell into the deep sleep of an exhausted man.

Continuing the conversation, Olivieri offered his services to Beyle for forwarding letters.

"You will be satisfied, Signor Commissary, and for old times' sake I won't ask you more than five francs. I guarantee that the letter will be delivered."

Beyle realized that in the journey that lay before him he might be more exposed to accidents than this crafty Italian, but nevertheless he did not want to entrust any serious correspondence to him. So having taken out a pencil and asked for a scrap of paper, he wrote :

Vilna, 7th December, 1812.

I am well, my dear friend. I have often thought of you all the way from Moscow here. The journey has taken me fifty days. I have lost everything, I have nothing except what I stand up in. The only thing that pleases me is that I have got thin. I have undergone a good deal of physical suffering and without any moral satisfaction. But all is forgotten, and I am ready to begin serving His Majesty again.

Having folded the note over in the form of a letter, he wrote on it the address of his sister Pauline, his only friend in the whole family. Olivieri melted a piece of red sealing-wax. Beyle applied an army button on his sleeve in place of a seal and handed the letter to the Italian.

"We'll see who will get to Grenoble first."

"Don't worry, Signor, the letter will get there before you," replied Olivieri.

"It is really a good idea to send a letter to Pauline," thought Beyle. "It may get there before me. My role is now finished."

It was actually finished on 23rd November, when on the banks of the Bobr the Minister Daru congratulated Beyle on behalf of the Emperor on the success of his undertaking. Beyle, having gone through the enemy's country with a small escort of dragoons and three million roubles in his pocket, completed the difficult operation of buying corn and distributing it among the units of the retreating army. Daru rightly remarked that without this brilliant work of Beyle's it would have been impossible to move towards Vilna. Now Beyle's role was finished; the Vilna stores were infinitely rich, but there was nobody to use them—there was no longer an army. "That strange General Buonaparte," who arrived at Pogulianka last night, without entering the city of Vilna, had sent Caulaincourt to the Governor General Hoderdorp with an order to provide the Emperor with horses and an escort.

"I write to Pauline that I am again ready to begin serving 'His Majesty,'" thought Beyle, "but 'His Majesty' has left the army and is trying to get away so hurriedly that when Hoderdorp arrived in Pogulianka after Caulaincourt, he did not find 'His Majesty' there. Such is 'General Buonaparte's' hurry to desert after giving orders to the troops to hold out in Vilna. No, it is a good thing the letter is written as it is ! If it gets intercepted, it won't arouse any suspicion. It is a brief, quite discreet note from the army to relations in France, without the least hint at any unpleasant disillusionment in the Imperial deserter."

Gaétan was asleep. Beyle, feeling a numbness in his legs, sat motionless.

"Anyway, one is sure of a few days' rest in Vilna. Should I move on ahead of the army, availing myself of legitimate leave, or should I stay and gather strength for the rest of the journey?"

He recalled the conversation he had had the previous day with Count Durosnel, the Commandant of Vilna.

"These aristocrats are amusing when they suddenly become devout. Instead

of looking after his business, the Count ordered Masses to be said in the church of St. John. How can one think of such nonsense as the Mass in such serious and dangerous moments? Great characters and lucid minds have positively died out since the days of the *Encyclopædia*. Will there ever come a time when the clear and simple understanding of the laws of matter will determine the mutual connection of human societies?"

He recalled the evenings he had spent reading his favourite books in the rue du Bac in Paris. The finest pages of the great French materialists, men of free minds and insatiable curiosity, had given him a calm stability of outlook, released his will from all authorities and brought the light of pure analysis and lucid dialectics into that sphere in which people usually make fantastic conjectures and elaborate false theories for the enslavement of other people's minds and wills. Then his thoughts returned to Buonaparte. The idea flashed through his mind:

"Russia . . . human societies . . . the first distinct ideas of the things of this unique world to which I wholly belong and which also belongs to me up to the moment of dissolution of the very delicate substance called my vital centres and contained in this skull."

Beyle had received his first lessons in materialism during two revolutions from a remarkable man—a geometrician named Gros, who lived at Grenoble. He had a precise mind. He used to take his pupil Beyle to the meetings of the Jacobin club without his parents' knowledge. Where was that rabid partisan of republican France now? What a beautiful rest his lessons were after the religious nonsense of the priests, by whom Beyle's father had insisted that he should be taught! The Republic had outlawed all priests who refused to take the oath to it. But his father hid priests in the attic and cellars of his house, in barns and stables. They crept out of their hiding places like beetles out of a crevice, dirty and evil-smelling, in soiled cassocks, and appeared in the little room in the rue des Vieux-Jésuites and devoured an enormous quantity of food. It was they who taught the little Beyle Latin and the precepts of the Roman Catholic religion. Both were equally distasteful to him. The Abbé Raillane beat his pupil on the hands for refusing to write a poem on the absurd theme of how a fly was drowned in a cup of milk during the Abbé's lesson. The boy was to describe this event in Latin verse and as he obstinately refused, Raillane told him that he would be doomed to everlasting torments in hell if he did not do the bidding of a priest. Beyle "did not mind in the least," but he would not write about the fly. After a beating which was only stopped by the arrival of his grandfather, old Gagnon, who had once visited Voltaire, the Abbé had to give in to his pupil. That was a memorable day. Old Gagnon in stockings and slippers, a black silk vest and three-tiered snow-white wig was an exception in the family. A scoffing yet gentle relic of a by-gone age, he had in his blood the ardour of his Italian ancestors and in his brain the wise irony of the philosopher of Ferney. In his house in the rue Grenette everything was quite different; it was not at all like the Beyles' house. There were no horrid slippery stairs and nail-studded doors as in the house of Beyle's father. There was a wonderful glass gallery covered with vines and full of light. It was large and spacious and terminated in the entrance to a mysterious room—the library, where the boy managed to read so much that was forbidden. His grandfather had spent about a thousand francs on the purchase of the *Grand Encyclopædia of the sciences, arts and crafts*. How intense must have been the inner urge of the old man that made him spend

out of his comparatively slender means such a large sum of money on the purchase of the *Encyclopædia* of Diderot and D'Alembert !

On the day when the Abbé Raillane made free with his hands, old Gagnon persuaded him to give up the theme of "The fly in the milk" and to read Horace to the little Beyle. But instead of forcing this on the infuriated boy who did not know where to put his hands, which were covered with weals from the strap, the old man himself took the book out of his pocket and began to read and comment on the text, addressing the Abbé and the boy in turns.

Beyle remembered that day quite well. His father, Chérubin Beyle, came in just as the old man was pronouncing the words : "*O Rus ! Quando te aspiciam ?*" Horace was fond of the country. He himself planted things in his garden and preferred his house in the country to noisy Rome. Hence the exclamation : "*O Rus ! Quando te aspiciam ?*" Chérubin interrupted his father-in-law :

"I too am inclined to make that exclamation, but with a different meaning and in quite a different connection. The revolution has gone too far. The only salvation from disorders and the terror is Rus, or rather, the Russian troops. And remember my words, my dear Abbé, when I say that in response to the general exclamation of France : '*O Rus ! When shall I see thee ?*' the Russian Emperor will send his troops to restore the legitimate kings to the throne of France."

"I doubt, dear nephew," replied Gagnon, who always called his son-in-law "nephew," "whether Latin grammar would forgive you for playing with words in this way, although Russia, as I have heard, is in fact an enormous steppe with—villages—" Gagnon stressed the word, "but all the same the word Russia cannot be derived from the Latin *rus*. As for your opinion of the Republic, remember that the striving of the peoples for righteous and perfect forms of government is much more appropriate to them than the striving of the aristocracy for the equilibrium of the two estates. Nature created man free. A child, when it is born, does not choose for itself either titles or social class, and being rightly educated, it has the same properties of mind as any other, as *Helvétius* has well said in his *Traité de l'esprit*. Ought you, dear nephew, to turn the times back or hasten their course, or take offence at history, when you know that it is useless ? I too suffer a good deal at the sound of the shooting in the Place Grenette, but I will tell you straight—I don't believe the terror was the whim of some madmen. People want to manifest their capacities freely, and not to pray to the privileges of the nobility. As for the Russian Emperor, I am convinced that any aid received from that Scythian country would only make the position of our fatherland worse."

"You say terrible things, very respected monsieur Gagnon ! Remember that those scoundrels executed the King !"

"Why shouldn't they execute him when he was a traitor !" exclaimed the boy.

But in spite of his grandfather's pleading, Beyle was punished a second time, only this time not by the priest, but by his father. His grandfather would have shielded the boy in the skirt of his coat, but the latter refused to seek refuge and protection : he was suffering for his political convictions, and he was a ten-year-old republican !

And now Beyle was in Vilna. The Republic had long since perished. France was once again in a blind-alley. The soldiers of the Russian Emperor were pursuing the remnants of the French army, who were streaming



impetuously towards the west. All was lost. Apparently there was nothing left to lose except life. They met with a thousand chances of dying every day, but they were firmly resolved to remain alive. On that terrible march to Vilna they encountered long stretches and wildernesses, where there was not a single habitation or a place where they could stop. An attempt to spend the night at a wayside inn nearly cost Beyle his life. One night they came across a cottage, that stood hidden in the darkness. Nobody answered their knock. The gates were hanging only on the upper hinges, but the door was closed from within. Evidently there was somebody inside, but he would not let them in. Pressing with his shoulder, Beyle managed to open the door. A huge figure barred his way and fell upon him. A pistol shot lit up the room. A corpse, that had been frozen to the door, tumbled on to the floor. Dozens of dead men at the tables and beside the walls, half-naked and gnawed by wolves, surrounded Beyle. All who were sitting or lying were frozen stiff, yet they exuded a faint and terrible smell of death. The horses in the yard dashed aside. Rushing out into the porch, Beyle managed to catch a frenzied horse by the bridle. Two others, which had broken the traces, were neighing, covered with foam as on a hot day. If they rushed away into the snowy wastes, death would be inevitable. The kibitka was pressed up against the doors of a shed. A terrible commotion was heard within. Five huge well-fed wolves with gleaming eyes sprang out one after the other from a little window just below the roof of the shed. At least that was the number Beyle counted after firing his pistol twice.

And here at last was Vilna. Here he could rest with the prospect of continuing his journey without danger. Gaétan, however, was not drowsing but fast asleep. It was useless to try to rouse him. It was half past three in the afternoon. It was time for him to go back to his quarters in Castle Street and to see the Commandant about the post-horses.

Into the café, jingling his spurs, came the familiar commanding officer of the 8th Regiment of Uhlans, Prince Dominic Radziwill, the owner of huge estates in Lithuania and Poland, a twenty-six-year-old chamberlain of the Russian Emperor's Court, who had taken the oath of fidelity to Napoleon. Elegant, frivolous, garrulous, twice married and twice divorced, in war he felt as though in a ballroom. He was very fond of the towns in the rear, which were always full of fast-living people squandering money, carousing and arranging dances at the farms for French officers with mazurkas and polonaises from dawn to dawn.

At one time Beyle himself had longed for such a life, but that was long ago. He had been a pupil of the *École Centrale* founded by the Convention, and the objects of his sighs—the actress Kably—always appeared to him in a setting of ballroom glamour. Now his heart was quite calm, and the long habit of a stern life of abstinence had become a second nature to him.

Radziwill was not alone. He was accompanied by Joseph Lefebvre, who was a contemporary of his, a short man with shining black curly hair, enormous dark eyes and small fair moustaches. This Lefebvre, a man of exceptional daring, at the age of twenty-six held the rank of General and was in command of a brigade which had been almost completely annihilated in the recent battles. A Brigadier General without a brigade, he himself, only a week ago, had been lying in a Vilna hospital. He entered the café with Radziwill, still abusing the doctors and the hospital arrangements :

"If it hadn't been for my remarkable health, those rascals would have killed me with their treatment. The only soldiers who survive are those who have

the strength to throw heavy objects at the doctors to drive them away from the mattress on the dirty floor. There are no beds, no sheets. It's the deuce of a place! The Litovsky Castle is packed with eight thousand rotting and groaning semi-corpses. They carry the dying ones out into the yard and stack them up like logs by the tower with the embrasure intersected by a cross—you know the one. Just imagine: this stack of frozen human bodies is one hundred and fifty metres long and reaches up to the second storey."

As they passed the small table, the two officers caught sight of Beyle. Having exchanged greetings, they sat down together and began to make fun of the sleeping Gaétan. Beyle corroborated that he had seen these incredible stacks of eight thousand corpses by the wall of the Litovsky Castle and related in his turn how a Byelorussian had repaired his shell-battered cottage with frozen corpses instead of beams. The conversation switched to the present situation. Radziwill, laughing and tapping the table with his chamois glove, said:

"It's all right for you. You're going back home. But what's going to become of me? King Alexander (he called the Emperor Alexander by his Polish title) has issued a decree confiscating all my property. Shall I be forced to sell it quickly to my two wives, fourteen uncles and eighteen cousins to leave myself with something to live on?"

"This Pole seems to think only of money," thought Beyle. "Well, I suppose it's a good thing he doesn't have to worry himself about his devotion to Napoleon."

Lefebvre questioned Beyle about Moscow. But the latter no sooner began to say something than Lefebvre quickly interrupted him:

"You were wrong to give up the Polytechnic. . . . France needs engineers and mathematicians. . . . You can't put it right now. . . . British industry is getting ahead of us, and instead of wasting our time round Moscow, we ought to be building steam factories. . . . Those scoundrels in the Convention didn't institute the Euler polytechnic for nothing. They knew that to-day you can't get along without machinery. . . . I'm an artilleryman and the commander of a brigade. But if I had graduated from your school, I'd have been an inspector of artillery. We need to catch up with England, but instead we can't get out of the impasse. Yesterday some French newspapers arrived. It's a bad thing that in Flanders the last cloth-makers are being discharged. His Majesty can't send an army to Russia without trousers. That was all right in Italy. Then we took nunneries by storm in such a state. A nun mistress of mine made me a pair of riding breeches out of a cassock. That's no damned good now. . . . You look younger, Beyle! How old are you?"

"I shall be exactly thirty in January."

"Just think of it! I was fifteen when I became a cavalry orderly and rode all over Lombardy on horseback. . . ."

"You are now twenty-six, but you have managed to kill a good number of men. . . ."

"I tell you—I was fifteen when I first killed a man and made another. Compliment me on my children. I don't know what their names are, but I'm sure there must be a hundred of them in all the towns of Italy."

A gust of wind beat against the window; the glass tinkled faintly in answer to a distant rumbling in the air. The conversation was interrupted. All exchanged glances, and expressions of alarm and annoyance appeared on their faces. At four o'clock that day the cannonade began near Vilna.

## CHAPTER FIVE

FIVE MONTHS AND ELEVEN DAYS HAD ELAPSED SINCE THE FRENCH SET UP THEIR rule in Vilna. The sound of the cannonade was still a long way off, but the very possibility of it was a surprise to Beyle and his companions. With strained attention they listened in silence to those faint, hardly perceptible waves that beat against the window-panes of the café. Beyle listened intently ; he knew that it was difficult to determine the distance by the sound : it might even be very far off, if the wind was with the sound, or it might be very near.

Gaétan, who had been asleep during the conversation, woke up when they all stopped talking. He was wide awake instantly, as men wake in war. From the faces of his companions he realized everything. He shook hands with Radziwill and Lefebvre without uttering a word. At that moment Bergognié and Beyle's comrade Busche, the companion of many of his journeys and an auditor of the Council of State, entered the room.

"They say it is the artillery of the Cossack Soslavin, but reconnaissance reports that he is still a very long way off."

"But have the Neapolitans here any reconnaissance?" asked Beyle with malicious irony.

"Well, not military reconnaissance, of course," replied Lefebvre.

"Ah, is that so?" exclaimed Busche. "In that case my conclusion about Soslavin's artillery being a long way off was premature. Please forgive me."

"What the deuce is the good of your cavalymen, if you don't send out patrols?" asked Beyle.

Lefebvre replied again : "It is hard to judge about matters in Vilna generally, but the hospital doctors say there is not a single Italian who is not frost-bitten. The French, especially the Normans, bear the cold much better, but the Italians become numb at once and then lose all sense of cold, after which they cut off their hands, feet and ears. In the majority of cases even light operations end in 'snow blanket,' as they say here."

"I'm not talking about that," retorted Beyle. "I meant to say that the army has completely disintegrated. More than once in Moscow I saw officers and soldiers fighting over a share in the booty. And the fact that your cavalry is doing nothing in Vilna merely confirms my opinion."

"The situation is certainly unpleasant ! Murat did not expect the Russians to get anywhere near for another three or four days," said Gagnon. "You were quite right, Henri, when you drove me out of Vilna."

"Beyle is a prudent fellow. I say without exaggeration if it hadn't been for him, I shouldn't be sitting here ; I'd be under the ice of the Berezina," said Bergognié, taking hold of Beyle's hand and squeezing it. "If you had known how terrible it was when the cursed Berezina filled with water above the crust of ice and flooded a whole kilometre ! A thin layer of ice formed on the second surface of the water, and this creaked and moved and rocked under your feet. Brede the Bavarian saved us. Wandering with his brigade through the forests and along the banks near Studzianka he met a Lithuanian riding a wet horse. I can't tell you how Brede managed to make himself understood, but the Lithuanian showed him a spot at Studzianka where he had crossed the Berezina on horseback, getting on the horse's crupper and not even wetting his boots. The wet horse served as the best interpreter of the Lithuanian language into the German-French that Brede speaks. By the time the Staff got to know

about this crossing, the water had risen again. The width of the river frightened everybody. Murat convinced the Emperor that it was impossible for the army to get across and persuaded him to make up his mind to leave without the army. Peasants and innkeepers from the neighbouring villages were invited to the Staff. The Staff questioned them a long time about crossings, rewarded them handsomely and let them go, mentioning aloud the points and districts where our crossing was supposed to take place. Evidently the Russians were caught on this bait as their searches were concentrated precisely in those places. I don't know what happened afterwards. I heard that the Emperor with Caulaincourt, Mouton and Vonsovich crossed the next day. I was quite ill and worn out and should have been done for but for Henri ! That wise fellow persuaded me to cross the river in the evening at the spot where the work of the pontoons was still only being planned. Without him I should never have ventured on that hazardous operation. And so I was saved. Well, what do you think of things now ?" he asked, turning to Beyle.

Beyle glanced at Bergognié, who was weakened by illness, and said in a sharp tone : "I don't think about them at all, because our enriched marshals and the army, which doesn't understand what it is fighting for, are not doing anything. I expected that France would declare Poland free from Russian despotism, that Lithuania would be set on its feet, that in Russia we would strike a blow at slavery. Nothing of the sort has happened. Even the energy of 1796 has disappeared from our army, to say nothing of 1793 ! Why do I say this ? You remember, Bergognié ; I think it must have been on the sixth of November at Smolensk. You remember incredibly thick snow was falling. Count Daru, who came dashing up, was so covered with snow that we didn't recognize him at first ? You remember how a double row of sentries was immediately thrown round him and the Emperor ? Well, you remember what was the matter ?"

"Well, yes, go on, I remember," said Bergognié embarrassed, and as though not understanding why Beyle was evoking this painful recollection.

"Well then : you remember what happened after I asked you the reason for this double row of sentries ? Everybody realized that something had happened."

"Well, yes, I remember," replied Bergognié with frank annoyance in his voice, turning towards the window so as not to look Beyle in the face. But the latter, leaning his chest against the table, tried to catch Bergognié's eyes and oblige him to speak.

Bergognié held his tongue.

"Look here, Bergognié. Don't make a secret of what everybody knows. We won't mention the names of those whom the Emperor invited immediately after reading the dispatch brought by the Count. The Emperor was at Smolensk, and at the time in Paris they were suppressing the Malet conspiracy, issuing denials to the secretly printed leaflets, announcing the complete destruction of the French army and calling for the arrest of the Ministers and Prefects in order, as some thought, to set up the Bourbons and, as others thought, to restore the days of the Convention. But that is not the point. The Malet conspiracy was an amalgamation of monarchists and extreme republicans, who unexpectedly united against Napoleon. . . . The point is that the Emperor summoned us among other officers and told us bluntly, without concealing anything, what had happened in Paris. He always likes to find out people's reactions to sudden changes."

Bergognié frowned.

Beyle continued : "I'm not talking about you, but remember with what

pain other senior officers said : 'So the terrible revolution of 1789 is not yet finished ? So there is likely to be a new Jacobin club ?' The Emperor got the impression that the officers had lost faith in the stability of his rule ; among the elegant Marshals and titled officers of the Staff there was dismay and fear of the Jacobins. And they had not the courage to remember what Napoleon himself had said in 1796 ! Well, then, I'll tell you that in 1796 the army was aware that it was fighting for its own cause. Please, don't frighten me with gestures. I see your arguments. On every finger of your protesting hand hang Robespierres, Saint-Justs, Couthons and Marats. You remember that eighteen years ago the French peasants were given the land, and when they were prevented by foreign arms from ploughing the fields and vineyards, they replied by sending armed detachments to the frontiers. There was no Court then. The artificial manners of the court were forbidden by law ; a surgeon did not require an embroidered waistcoat to perform an operation ; the revolutionary war gave a naturalness to people's behaviour and seriousness to their minds and characters. With that revolutionary war General Buonaparte crossed the Alps in 1794. That was eighteen years ago. Then a sergeant, a private, almost, could become an adjutant. Then in the name of the revolution the son of a cooper rose from the ranks to be a Marshal. Now the bourgeoisie chase after titles, and the Emperor is afraid of ridicule. Every new song that's sung makes him fall out with the police in Paris. Tell me, Lefebvre, to return to our subject, how many men have passed through your brigade in the past two years ?"

"Seventy-nine thousand men."

"Then it is not a permanent unit, but a passage-way where, not for a single day is there a closely-knit military family. And it is not because of the war. This continuous flux, which has changed the composition of the brigade thirty-five times, carries with it individuals of increasingly worse quality, and the disintegration of the army, moreover, is also going on at the top. The old stream of titled men, dreaming of 'legitimate' rule, has poured into the Staffs. I'm not talking of Radziwill. He has his own reasons for becoming a supporter of the French arms. I'm talking of our aristocrats : they have their own accounts with Buonaparte, as they express it. And so you have the old wine in the Staff bottles, and the still unfermented youth in the battalions. But worst of all is the disappearance of a lively interest in what France is fighting for. Can it be admitted that an illiterate, wild horde of Don peasants called Cossacks could have put to flight thousands of Frenchmen who knew what they are fighting for ? Russia is not victorious because she is good, but because we have become bad. I know the Russian troops ; I saw and read enough in Moscow. Russia is a country of pretenders, slavery and deceit. Rastopchin, who invoked God in every proclamation of his, forgot to hide away in his library the manuscript 'On the non-existence of God.' I read it myself, spending whole days in his palace. I read it with the help of a Polish boy, Pierre Kachowski, I think he called himself. On the table lay instructions to set fire to the palace. However, in throwing incendiary rockets about everywhere, Rastopchin managed to leave his own palace intact. And they are all like that. I found the most terrible revelations of the secrets of the Russian Court in Rastopchin's library. My coachman, Artemisov, brought me this scholar Kachowski, who knew French well and was stranded in Moscow. I asked him to read to me the memoirs of the Russian historians. They were terrible stories of the three false Dimitrys and the false Peter, who turned out in reality to be Pugachev, but I also found there an English pamphlet which revealed to me the secret of the present dynasty.

The present so-called Romanovs are also pretenders. They are no different from the previous ones. One called himself Peter III and was Pugachev, the other calls himself Alexander Romanov and in reality he is simply Saltykov, who received his nobility straight from Catherine's bed-chamber. And this country. . . ."

"Stop, Beyle," said Busche. "I never thought you would return to your Grenoble days. You're repeating your boyish mistakes."

"No, these are not mistakes. What are the French doing here? Instead of liberating the people and destroying the traffic in eastern slaves, the French are inciting Jew against Pole and Byelorussian against Lithuanian so as to be able to maintain themselves in the country with weak garrisons."

Lefebvre intervened in the conversation.

"But you seem to have an aversion to war generally. Really, Beyle, your sentiments are hardly fitting for a War Commissary of the Emperor's Government."

"I talk as an observer of human character. I try to be guided by logic and to study the heterogeneous composition of our army as an investigator."

"But where is your patriotism?"

"I have none, at least not in your sense. Each class understands the word 'fatherland' in its own way, which is not at all like the others."

"How? This is indeed something new! But what are you going to do in the future?"

"I'm going to Milan. It is my favourite city."

"I thought you were going to Marseilles," interjected Busche venomously. All exchanged glances.

"Why Marseilles?" asked Bergognié. "Ah, yes," he continued, "the beautiful Mélanie Guilbert is there. By the way, how is she?"

"Is it possible that you don't know?" began Busche. "Beyle, you needn't listen, turn away. You, gentlemen, have no idea what exploits this War Commissary was capable of six years ago at most. The artiste Mélanie got an engagement at the city theatre in Marseilles, and Beyle, so as not to be separated from his friend, obtained an 'engagement' for himself in a grocer's shop."

"What next!" exclaimed Lefebvre.

Radziwill smiled politely, trying to show that he was not in the least shocked by the Frenchmen.

Busche continued: "For the sake of that woman I'd be willing to become a cobbler or a lackey. I saw her on her return to Paris from Marseilles, after you were separated," he added, turning to Beyle. "She complained about you, Henri. At first she was delighted with your behaviour; indeed to become a grocer, a clerk at Meunier's, was a great sacrifice, but she herself made no mean sacrifice for you."

"I heard that she presented him with a daughter," said Gaétan Gagnon. "You yourself told me how you used to bathe together on the shady, tree-covered banks of the Huveaune."

Beyle looked at them all coldly and said: "Yes, at the time I wrote to my uncle that the little girl was my daughter. But now that she is dead and Mélanie, having married Baskov, has been five years in Russia, there is no reason why I should conceal anything. The girl was not my daughter. Mélanie is in Petersburg and is hardly likely to see France again. I would prefer to change the subject of our conversation."

A movement was heard in the next room. Somebody quickly opened the

door. Olivieri came in, looking very alarmed as he made his way among the tables. There were about twenty tables in the café and most of them were unoccupied.

"Gentlemen," said Olivieri to the scanty public. "It seems this is my last day of business. All the neighbouring houses are full of hungry and ragged men who have burst into the city. It is dangerous to leave the doors open. Have you any weapons and may I, with your permission, fasten the door securely? When messieurs the officers have finished, will they please let me take them out by another way."

All got up.

Radziwill wanted to settle the bill and pulled out his purse. The customers at the other tables also prepared to depart. Olivieri returned the money to the Polish prince with a respectful bow.

"Your Highness, I am a poor man. I have neither a Schoenberg nor Radziwilliszka, nor stocks and shares; pay with French money, if you please!"

"How dare you, you low-born cur!" shouted Radziwill.

"Your Highness, later on you will take the trouble to remember those words, but at present I beg you to take back Your Highness's counterfeit money."

Radziwill went scarlet in the face, but Joseph Lefebvre intervened and putting his hand on the hilt of Radziwill's broadsword, examined the banknotes. Instead of the usual "piat rublei,"<sup>1</sup> each banknote bore the inscription "piat rublbi." Beyle pointed out the error. Radziwill bent down and immediately noticed a second misprint—instead of "hodyacheiu monetoiu,"<sup>2</sup> the banknote bore the inscription "holyacheiu monetoiu."

"Low-born cur!" shouted Radziwill all of a sudden. "But I was given this money yesterday in the chancellory of the French Governor! Tell me, by way of a secret, where do they make this money?" he asked gruffly, addressing the Frenchmen.

"In any case not in France," Beyle calmly replied. "French engravers don't make mistakes . . . although the possibility is not excluded of ruining the enemy's market by means of a flood of false banknotes. That is what the British did to us in the days of the Convention."

Radziwill gave a slight shrug of the shoulders. Then he drew a gold coin from his pocket and tossing it on the table, said:

"This is evidently local aid for France on the part of friends working for their own benefit."

Beyle took up the phrase and said without batting an eyelid: "All friends work for their own benefit."

The Frenchmen smiled. Radziwill frowned, finding the allusion too obvious. In similar circumstances in peace-time a quarrel would very quickly have broken out, but the sense of common danger had a pacifying effect on all. The muffled sounds of the cannon-fire shook the iron air of the frosty day. The artillery was accompanied by rifle fire which came from a side-street not far away. Putting their money on the table and inspecting their pistols, the customers in the café began to leave one by one. Olivieri led them to the cellar, where he drew back a stone slab and showed them out by a dark underground passage, which retained the warmth of the subsoil even in the severest cold weather.

When Beyle, Busche and Gagnon found themselves on a vacant plot of land in another quarter and came out into a street, they were confronted by a strange spectacle.

<sup>1</sup> "Five rubles."

<sup>2</sup> "Negotiable currency."

## CHAPTER SIX

A GROUP OF ABOUT A HUNDRED MEN, LOOKING IN THE TWILIGHT LIKE A HUGE dark patch, walked along or rather, crept along the street in mysterious silence. From time to time there came the sound of knocking on a door and shouts.

Beyle and his cousin watched the moving crowd with amazement, unable to make out who these people were.

"Are they marauders?" asked Gagnon at last.

"I don't think so," replied Beyle.

At that moment came the sound of breaking glass. There was a despairing shout and a shot rang out. The crowd halted and answered the shot with menacing growls. Beyle and Gagnon ran towards the nearest house. The men raised their fists, threw stones, and banged on the windows and doors, rocking the house of the unfortunate inhabitant of Vilna to its foundations. The cause of the disturbance soon became apparent. The remnants of a big detachment had broken into Vilna. The soldiers' feet were bound with rags, their beards and moustaches were covered with ice; their glassy eyes, with trickles of blood instead of tears under their chapped eyelids, gazed vacantly in front of them. They were making a last effort to get some sort of shelter after many days of struggle for life against cold and hunger. Now they had already broken into the house, no longer meeting any opposition. But the long-awaited shelter had come too late: these relics of human beings were incapable of regaining their reason and memory without being looked after by others. Some fell down from exhaustion, slipping on the ice-covered steps and failing to get up again; others, bursting into the house, overturned the lamp and involuntarily set fire to their longed-for shelter. The wooden house quickly caught fire, and the flames drove back the maddened men. In a few minutes the street was filled with clouds of pungent smoke. The fire spread to the neighbouring houses. Gaétan, covering his face with his hands, rushed along the street.

With a disdainful glance over his shoulder, Beyle went to the Commandant's office, avoiding the side-streets leading to Kovno Street, from the direction of which came the sound of shooting, shouting and the rumble of a disorderly mass of troops and transports. But there was scarcely a street or side-street in which the same scene with scores of variations was not being enacted: crowds of starving and ragged men were storming houses and shops, now getting possession of them, now falling back and skipping aside to avoid the hail of bullets from the windows. Beyle halted in amazement: five soldiers, just as starving as the rest, were trying to organize the mob. They divided it up into platoons and detachments and urged the men to organize themselves without their officers, since the latter had run away like cowards, leaving their units to the mercy of fate. They shouted and threatened, calling on their comrades to maintain discipline as they were still a long way from France. And strangely enough, two or three hundred men near the Ostrobramski Gates formed up in ranks and marched along the street in perfect order without shouting, having listened to the exhortations of their elected commanders, who shouted that only in this way could they get good accommodation, rest and food. In the next street Beyle saw a German unit, tired but marching in perfect order. The soldiers were talking among themselves. Behind them trailed a dozen carts drawn by Russian farm horses. The Germans chose the little side-streets. Their homeland was not far away. As they marched past Beyle, he could hear them counting up the halts, night's lodgings and days before they would reach



Koenigsberg. In the faces of the officers was a calm and stern assurance ; the German detachment was coming to the end of its journey.

The calm of the Bavarians seemed to Beyle to be the result of their indifferent attitude towards the outcome of Buonaparte's campaign, but he was amazed at their organization and administrative efficiency at a time when everything had collapsed, above all, faith in the justice of the war. Every turning and every corner opened up new scenes before him, each more wretched than the last. A mixed detachment, in which it was impossible to distinguish the different regiments, was besieging the provision depot. Neapolitan infantrymen with their muskets at the ready stood thirty paces from the walls and allowed nobody to come near. There was a light in the windows of the top floor. A huge fire was burning in the street. A mob a thousand strong surged towards the fire, pushing the foremost rows into the pools of thawed snow and the clouds of smoke, even into the fire itself. Shouts and threats resounded. At times the voices of the mob were mingled in one wild threatening yell. But the gates and doors of the provision depot did not open. In the nearest rows stood soldiers, who were cursing the officers for running away like cowards, deserting the detachments and taking refuge in warm houses. These cries of the French, addressed to the Italian soldiers, apparently made no impression either on the Neapolitan infantrymen or on the officers who were looking out at the street from the lighted windows of the second floor. A wicket was opened. A shot from a heavy pistol rent the air. The crowd became silent. The Neapolitans fired a salvo at the silent mob. A man fell here and there. The front rows fell back. There were groans and wild shouts, and the mob swept the Neapolitans away. Hatchets and crow-bars appeared, doors were smashed and windows shattered. A minute later a hatless officer was being dragged across the square. They tore off his epaulettes, and having beaten him up threw him into the fire.

There was no limit to their fury.

Passing two quarters of the city and having some difficulty in finding his way, Beyle hastened towards the Commandant's office. The streets he now came to were already roped off. Going up to the cordon, Beyle presented his army pass. The soldier paid no attention to it. He couldn't read and did not understand French ; he glared suspiciously at Beyle. When Beyle tried to pass, the soldier barred the way with his musket.

"No admittance ! It is forbidden," he said in Italian with a strong Corsican accent.

Beyle spoke in Italian :

"Fellow-countryman ! I didn't know you were Italian ! Where do you come from ?"

"I'm from Sartena."

"Ah, a Corsican ! I'm from Naples ! Let me pass, friend, they are waiting for me at Headquarters."

The soldier smiled kindly and said politely : "If you please, Signor Commandatore."

In the Commandant's office Beyle was bluntly refused horses. Then Gagnon, who had arrived earlier, came up to him waving his arms.

"Ah, you here already ?" said Beyle. Then without losing any of his equanimity he continued to study the situation in silence.

He had already heard from the stories and reports of officers who were constantly arriving that during the past hour and a half more than thirty thousand hungry soldiers of the Grand Army, who had thrown away their

arms, had burst into Vilna, and that General Seslavin's Cossack hordes were after them. Urgent instructions were given to regulate the movement through the streets of those units which were marching with their arms; to shoot marauders; to establish at least some order in the terrible chaos that prevailed in Vilna, which only yesterday was quiet and "breathing abundance," as the Commissary expressed it.

"All is not well in the palace of the King of Naples," said an officer.

"What, has Murat been killed?"

"Nonsense!" interposed Durosnel. "You shouldn't give way to panic. I must ask you gentlemen not to repeat false rumours."

"Of course it is nonsense," said an officer who came in. "I have just heard Murat. He made a speech to the detachment stationed near the Panarski hills. The King heaped such choice abuse on the soldiers and enumerated all the various portions of his own anatomy so masterfully that the soldiers forgot about their misfortunes for a moment in their amazement. It's a substantial detachment, quite capable of delaying the Cossacks."

"It's you who are talking nonsense, not me!" the panic-monger interrupted the optimist.

Just then the gunfire beyond the city was intensified and as though in answer to it came the crack of rifle-fire. Durosnel glanced round the company and said with the calm of a skilful actor: "It's at least twenty kilometres away." Then, turning to Beyle, he said coldly and firmly: "Monsieur le Directeur, I really don't know what I can do for you. The Vilna nobility, merchants and members of the Provisional Government took all the horse with such incredible swiftness when they secretly left the city that I don't know what you can go on; my quartermasters have already told you they have no horses. Try to get some from another source."

An officer leaned over towards the Commandant and whispered something in his ear. The Commandant turned pale and left the room in a hurry. Nobody paid any attention to this. A tired, harassed orderly was packing files and documents into a huge leather trunk.

A young officer with crazy eyes, frost-bitten moustaches and his arm in a sling, who was sitting in a fur coat in spite of the terrible heat in the room, was telling his neighbour how during the last halt for the night the soldiers set fire to the village and warmed themselves round the blazing cottages. They had been unable to go inside as the houses were full of corpses. Out of the pungent smoke the brutalized men dragged pieces of human flesh and—he had seen this himself—devoured them.

"Evidently it was not the first time," continued the officer, "judging by the businesslike way they went about it; lacking salt the men at the camp-fires sprinkled gunpowder on the roast flesh."

Beyle decided to go back to Olivieri at all costs. Gagnon bluntly refused to accompany him, hoping to get away with the Commandant. So Beyle went alone. The cordon at the Commandant's office had been removed. None of the people he met in the midst of unimaginable disorder and wild scenes could tell him where the French Staff was. Mingling with the mob and running across the streets now empty because of the firing, Beyle did not reach the café till two hours later. Nobody opened the door when he knocked. The gates and doors appeared to be not only locked but barricaded as well. He shouted to Olivieri. Nobody answered. He was in a state of exhaustion bordering on despair.

Taking out his pistol, he wanted to fire. To fire into the air? But what for? Then, controlling himself, he decided not to waste a shot that might be of use later, and suddenly he found himself in the grip of real fear.

"Is it possible that I am a coward?" he thought.

Questions put thus bluntly to himself nearly always had a good effect on his behaviour. But this time the question had little effect, and yet a week or two earlier his position had been a thousand times worse. But then he was supported by a sound and indestructible will to live, by that energy a man expends only on purposive and essential acts. Then his brain had not been puzzled over things that depressed him; it was trying to solve grave and important problems. He recalled how he had coldly and cynically parried the chaff of the officers about his being the chief organizer of the "cuisine de Smolensk." The prosaic work of feeding tens of thousands of men had been carried out by him with a simple and stern sense of duty. The consciousness of this duty had kept all his energies and emotions focused on the job.

"These musings are quite out of place; I might at least have stayed the night at the Commandant's office; as it is, I may be shot by marauders at the first fence. . . . And just as I am about to get back to Europe out of this hellish land of ice and slaves and rogues!"

A wicket opened and a man crept out of it. Beyle silently seized his arm. It was Olivieri with a bundle. He had a knife in his hand and was about to strike.

"How extraordinary you are, didn't you recognize me?"

"Ah, Signor, how you frightened me! This is the third time to-day that I've used my stiletto in order to get to my house. What is left behind here mustn't fall into the paws of the Cossacks."

"Olivieri, you must help me to get away."

"I can help you but only you. You can go with me now, but you must make haste, very great haste. I am sure that the Commandant, Signor Durosnel, has hidden the horses and to-night will get away with a baggage-train of goods of all kinds."

They passed through an alley invisible to the uninitiated. Beyle was surprised. It led apparently right through the city. The whole network of secret passages was well known to Olivieri. They entered the corridors of houses and penetrated into cellars; going twenty paces underground, they came out in the shed of a house and went across the yard; moving the stakes of the fence, they came out into some blind alley; they confidently removed the boards of a fence, boards that were apparently accustomed to this operation, for they opened out without any sound, moving on leather hinges. Then they went through a dwelling, encountering sullen, speechless persons, who turned away at the sight of them. All this they did at great speed and with the ease with which things are done in a dream. For about an hour and a half they went by this complicated route, which made it possible to pass through the Lithuanian city as if by magic.

Beyle thought: "His Majesty *Chance* is a real emperor commanding an army of minutes and seconds. To-day I am a faithful subject of this emperor. His power, at least, is more stable than that of Napoleon."

He soon forgot about his fatigue. He breathed deeply and gazed admiringly at the dark figure of his Corsican guide. An insignificant and ingratiating proprietor of a café, Olivieri had suddenly become resourceful and tense; he was like a steel spring, a juggler equipped with some mysterious vital force.

Turning a corner, they came out on to some waste land overgrown with

weeds and frost-covered, reminding one with its snow-white vegetation of pictures of Dante's *Inferno*. Beyle, struck by its appearance, halted behind Olivieri. The latter listened in silence a few moments.

"The artillery battle is over," he said. "To-day more than forty thousand Frenchmen have passed through Vilna. The Commissariat stores are intact and will pass to the Cossacks the day after to-morrow. The private houses have been plundered, and it will take many years to restore this glorious Lithuanian city. And what have your Commanders done? Marshal Ney scattered gold on the steps of the church of St. John. . . . A whole fraternity of nationalities was there. . . . Lithuanians, Poles, Frenchmen and Germans, forgetting their weapons, stuffed their pockets—the bastards! They killed Lefebvre when he wanted to put a stop to this infamy."

Beyle was silent.

Evidently Vilna was now far behind. For some time it had seemed to him that they were passing through a suburb. The snow sparkled in the moonlight. Crossing the waste land and passing a hedge, the wayfarers descended into a hollow. There, among the frost-covered poplars, stood a small homestead. They entered the yard. The outside windows were dark, but from the yard a light was visible in a window. Olivieri took out a flint and tinder, and sprinkled some gunpowder on the blade of a stiletto. The powder flashed and in answer to the signal the door opened.

A tall, broad-shouldered fellow with a hook nose and curly beard met them and led them into the room. A decrepit old man was sitting at the table. The room was poorly furnished, but it was impossible to make out what its owners were. Olivieri began to talk in some patois. They argued hotly for a long time. At last the dark-haired stalwart went out and after a minute returned, carrying in his arms a worn caftan, a sash, a torn lambskin cap, mittens and felt boots.

"You'll have to change your clothes," said Olivieri to Beyle.

Beyle made no objection. He merely asked whether he could keep his fur coat. The huge chamois pockets of the fur coat contained all that was left of his property. He had long since lost the chamois glove of his right hand, and had wrapped the hand in a towel. He had left with an orderly in Castle Street his books *Braunschweig Diary of 1806* and the manuscript of his *History of Painting in Italy*, on which he had begun work in Paris.

Olivieri nodded his head and added: "We must make haste. By the way, we'll put the boots, cap and army overcoat under the straw and take them with us. Don't worry, nothing will be lost. And if we get caught by the Cossacks, we'll say that we took them off a dead soldier. Your letter will now probably get to France before you," said Olivieri with a smile.

Beyle changed his clothes. The Jewish giant started talking again.

"He asks you to give him the army overcoat," said Olivieri to Beyle.

Beyle agreed, reluctantly. Baring his magnificent white teeth in an alarming yet kindly smile, the giant held out his hand to Beyle and said a few words.

"He thanks you," said Olivieri. "He says that such clothing will be particularly necessary to an honest smuggler to-morrow."

Quitting the homestead and going about twenty paces, Beyle saw a pair of horses harnessed, one behind the other, to a Russian sledge on the path between the poplars. The two travellers got into this little, narrow, barbarous carriage. A boy lying huddled up in the straw in the fore-part woke up, gave a whistle and cracked the whip, flicking the foremost horse.

"I'm coming with you as far as Koenigsberg," said Olivieri. "Things are going very badly near Vilna, but you will soon come back here, I assure you. Our Emperor Napoleon is invincible, and as a country Russia is done for!"

## CHAPTER SEVEN

ADMIRAL CHICHAGOV AND THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF ALL THE ARMIES, Kutuzov, were preparing to enter Vilna in triumph. Everything seemed to be going well. The star of Kutuzov's glory was rising high. Rumours were circulating that Alexander, having definitely made peace with Arakcheyev, was about to go to the army with him.

Kutuzov was only worried over "domestic" matters: Buonaparte's Imperial dinner service had fallen into the hands of Admiral Chichagov. The Admiral had not mentioned a word about it in his report. "Ah, that Admiral!" thought Kutuzov. "Now there is no doubt whatever that he let Buonaparte get away at Studzianka." And now, meeting Chichagov and regarding the bent back of the respectful Admiral, he bent his own massive frame and, staring with his one eye into space, said disdainfully in a husky voice:

"Your Excellency has let Buonaparte get away, but captured his dinner service?"

The Admiral replied respectfully without bending his back: "Your Illustrious Highness might have taken Napoleon's dinner service at Moscow," in this way hinting at the surrender of that city.

After this exchange of pleasantries by the Commander-in-Chief and the Admiral, all the Excellencies and Illustrious Highnesses set out for the plundered city of Vilna.

The return courier, who brought Lieutenant Shirkhanov to the Commandant's guard-room, having handed over the arrested officer with all respect, took the answering letter to the palace.

Arakcheyev wrote to the Tsar saying that owing to Nastenka's illness he was unable to join His Majesty; that he himself was very unwell and begged forgiveness, that he had even called in the Gruzino priest, who had written out his will, in which he thanked the Tsar for all his kindness and bequeathed to the State Treasury all his estates and properties in the event of his death. At the end was a little postscript saying that he was aware that Speransky had been secretly sending the draft of his Jacobin plans to the Tsar through the Chamberlain Melnikov, so that he, Arakcheyev, should not know about it. "Although this is a matter of the past, Your Majesty, I am aware that Melnikov is an important personage and I therefore beg you to discharge an old man like me."

The periodical tiff between Alexander and Arakcheyev was not of long duration. On the 6th December, or the 18th December New Style, the friends were reconciled. That day the Tsar of Russia confirmed Arakcheyev's testament with his own hand and on the same day set out with him as his principal and most trusted bodyguard and friend for the theatre of military operations, in the first place to the city of Vilna.

We left Lieutenant Shirkhanov of the Akhtyrsky Regiment in a most lamentable situation in the guard-room, where that well-meaning officer was pacing up and down his narrow cell after handing over his sword to the officer on duty and the morocco portfolio to the Minister's secretary, trying to fathom

what misdemeanours he could have been guilty of that he should have been put under arrest immediately on his arrival from Arakcheyev, and with the return courier too.

"Oh, these lower ranks in the courier service! They are like savage dogs: they look at you suspiciously, don't utter a word, fly like madmen, and at the slightest provocation roundly abuse the post-house superintendents!"

He went over every minute in his memory trying to discover some error he had made. Apparently his aunt had had good reasons for throwing up her hands, when he told her that the Ministry was sending him to Arakcheyev.

"Wait a little before you set out," she had implored. "I'll go and see Varvara Petrovna. No good will come to you without that."

Varvara Petrovna Pukalova, the wife of the secretary of the Synod, was Arakcheyev's mistress in the capital, while Nastenka Minkin was the friend of the "superior of the Gruzino cloister."

During these reflections a blue-eyed, close-cropped, broad-shouldered officer, likewise without a sword but with chevrons and stars, came into the cell, jingling his spurs. He was a cavalry captain of Hussars. Shirkhanov turned round to greet his visitor.

For a moment the Lieutenant and the cavalry captain said nothing.

The cavalry captain was the first to speak: "Have you been here long?"

"I was brought here this morning by the courier."

"Ah, so you're the man from Gruzino? Well, friend, I can't congratulate you. You're in the soup all right. I've just heard what they were saying about you."

"About me, Captain? What can be said about me?" asked Shirkhanov indignantly.

"Come, come! Better not adopt that tone, friend. 'What can be said about me?' to be sure! You've got seven days' detention in the guard-room, anyway. You are Prince Shirkhanov, are you not?"

"I am."

"There now! That shows what comes of leaving active service—straight into the soup, eh? Well, we shall see. Perhaps it may turn out all right yet. But you must remember—you're a good officer—one must guard one's honour in youth like a new uniform. Tell me, on the way to Arakcheyev did you not see a flag on a pole at the Chudovo turning?"

"I did," replied the Lieutenant.

"Was it on a horizontal or a vertical pole?"

"Horizontal, I think."

"Didn't the coachman say anything to you? Well, friend, that was your blunder. The Count was not receiving visitors, and you intruded on him."

"But I brought Arakcheyev a packet 'by order of His Majesty.'"

"Hey! What a greenhorn you are! What order of His Majesty can there be for Arakcheyev? Couriers and messengers are admitted, but higher officials from our capital turn back to Petersburg when they see the flag hanging like that. Well, how did the Count receive you?"

"He received me quite well."

"Quite well, indeed. Do you mean to say he treated you to vodka?"

"He did that too."

Seeing the grin on the officer's face, Shirkhanov flared up and was on the point of saying something rude.

As though realizing what was in his mind, the officer said: "Don't get

angry. I wasn't doubting you, but it wasn't Arakcheyev who treated you to vodka. You must realize that in these days he has no time for you and that he is not the master at Gruzino. You brought him the French post, didn't you?"

"I hope, Captain, you won't be inquisitive and ask me questions to which I could not answer without violating my oath.

"I'm not being inquisitive; I know more about this matter than you do. And here is your second blunder! Your comrades have already been making fun of you over it. The Tsar is known to have ordered all the intercepted post to be sent to Arakcheyev, but Arakcheyev doesn't understand anything in that line. He is a bad diplomatist; the whole point is that every mailbag that is sent to him is stuffed with indecent pictures, which are bought up everywhere for him and sent to him on the pretext of having been taken from the French. But apparently your packet didn't contain any. For a couple of weeks Arakcheyev has been searching for an album of indecent pictures by the Italian Pietro Aretino left behind by Marshal Ney. Did he open the packets in your presence?"

"No. I was called to the Count, or rather he came out to me a second time about an hour after receiving the packet."

"Well, of course he looked for Ney's album and was furious at not finding it. How long did you stay at his place?"

"About two days."

"That's a fairly long time. Well, did he take you into the 'temple'?"

"No, I didn't see any church."

"I'm not talking about a church, but the pink pavilion on the pond at Gruzino. It's a little room on a little island with full-length mirrors; you press a button and the mirror opens, and what pictures are revealed! Incredible! So while you were pen-pushing in Arakcheyev's library, Arakcheyev and Prince Engalychev, his chief executioner, were amusing themselves out there with these senile pranks."

The Lieutenant recalled the strange answers of Fedorov, from which it was impossible to gather whether Arakcheyev had left the estate or not, and the lengthy absence of the Count.

"You'd have done better not to have gone at all, friend," said the Captain. "You should have said you were ill, rather than go there without knowing anything about it. All fledglings like you fall out of the nest straight into the fire. Your aunt is a good woman, but she's wrong to want you to have a big career. In our country a man has to be a rascal to make a big career, and it's early for you to be a rascal! Far better forego the career!"

And forgetting that he was in the guard-room and might be overheard, he began to speak with indignation: "Did you see the cast-iron vase there from the windows?"

"I did. I even went up to it along the wintry path."

"Well then: Arakcheyev married Khomutova, but did not send away his mistress, Nastasia Minkin. I assure you it was Minkin who gave you the vodka to drink. Arakcheyev is so stingy that he wouldn't treat a visitor to a crust of bread. Now although that cast-iron vase was put there in the year of his marriage to Khomutova, it was in honour of his mistress—Minkin. Khomutova got to know about it and demanded that the vase should be removed. Arakcheyev would not agree. One day, in a fit of jealousy after a quarrel with his wife, he forbade her to go to Petersburg, and went away himself. She disobeyed him and

set out after he had left. The coachman drove her, but said to her on the way: 'Your Excellency's servants have been ordered to inform the Count immediately when you go anywhere in his absence.' Khomutova flew into a rage and shouted to the coachman: 'Drive me to my mother's!' The coachman did not understand at once and it was only on the way that he realized that the Count had fallen out with his wife. He drove the Countess to her mother's house, where she remained. Since then Nastasia has been complete mistress of the house. There are others in his harem, the mistress is Nastasia alone. Arakcheyev buys up peasant girls wherever he goes; he bought Nastasia from a landowner in the south. They say she's a blacksmith's daughter and has gypsy blood."

The Lieutenant felt embarrassed as he suddenly remembered what, in his opinion, had been his chief guilt. To hide the deep flush that came to his cheeks he went over to the window. Not a single movement of his escaped the watchful Captain.

"I see there is something suspicious here. Well, tell me, how did you find Arakcheyev's mistress?"

"Why are you so interested in that? Well, she was a magnificent figure in curling-papers and a Persian shawl."

"Arakcheyev bought that shawl from my mother for a song. The money was merely taken for show. But the shawl was worth three thousand chervontzi. You can pass it, folded, through a wedding ring. It's blue in the middle, covered all round with a delicate design in various colours. The texture is such that you can't tear it, and it is so enormous that it would cover the roof of the guard-room. I'm telling you this so that you may know to what an extent this serf woman has made a slave of Arakcheyev. It is ridiculous to say so, but she has only to prophesy misfortune for him and he will stay at home and not even go to the sessions of the State Council."

The Lieutenant was more and more amazed.

After a short silence, the Captain asked: "So you inspected the whole of the estate?"

"I had no time to do that. I merely went out to get a drink of water. Nobody answered my call. I tried to have a drink from a tub in the lobby. I thought it was water but it turned out to be some kind of pickled stuff. In the garden I swallowed some snow and thus slaked my thirst."

"Pickle . . ." repeated the Captain. "Do you know what that pickle is for? There are pickle tubs in all the Count's buildings, and willow rods and canes are steeped in them. The Gruzino serfs are whipped with them. And the man who carries out all the procedure is Minkin's assistant, the architect Minute. His name is Minute, but he tortures people for hours. The flogged serfs are then sent to the ice-room, which for some unknown reason Arakcheyev has christened with the senseless name 'Edikulem.'"

Suddenly the Lieutenant recalled and realized the meaning of the words he had heard when he entered the village: "Kill a chicken, you son of a bitch, and daub the blood on your face, back and buttocks. And when you come to the country-house, limp and groan and say that you've been flogged mercifully, and lay the blame on me. Only another time don't bring less than five three-copeck pieces."

"I don't understand," said Shirkhanov to his companion. "Why is the Tsar so attached to Arakcheyev?"

"That's not for you and me to understand. The Tsar loves edifying words, but is afraid to put them into action. And so you get an equilibrium. Speransky



was for the edifying words, and Count Arakcheyev for preventing them to become deeds. When you were still a little boy, Lieutenant, the present Tsar, who was heir to the throne, was Military Governor-General of St. Petersburg. The Emperor Paul suffered from insomnia, and every morning, not later than five o'clock, the Governor-General had to sign a report on the state of the capital. Well, Arakcheyev wrote the reports, got Alexander to sign them early in the morning and took them to the palace. It's an old friendship, and now Andrei Alexeyevich has become the Tsar's chief bodyguard."

A grenadier came in and announced smartly: "Lieutenant Prince Shirkanov is requested to go and see the Commandant."

There seemed to be nobody in the Commandant's study when Shirkanov entered, but a high-backed chair was pushed aside and a little old woman with tearful blue eyes, dropping a handkerchief from her left hand, rushed towards the Lieutenant.

"Mischenka, what has happened to you?" she exclaimed in French. "I don't believe that you could have been guilty in this way. General Weigel has just told me that you have been dismissed from the Minister's service and placed at the disposal of some Corps Commander. What does it all mean, my dear? What a lot of trouble I've taken! I asked Weigel to find out what it was all about, and wanted to go and see the Grand Duke myself, but the German waved his hand and said that he doesn't understand anything himself. At the Ministry they told him something unintelligible with a grin. I can't even make it out. 'We didn't send him to Count Arakcheyev for lace caps,' they said."

The Lieutenant was quite horrified. He tried somehow to soothe his aunt, but he himself found it hard to master his feelings.

"This is the devil of a business! I don't know which are worse—French bullets, camp lice or Petersburg snares," he said to himself as he picked up his aunt's handkerchief from the floor. The superficial evaluations of human misfortunes made by this inexperienced youth grown up on the proceeds of serfdom at that moment acquired a sudden and unexpected depth. There seemed to him no particular reason for his aunt's agitation. All his dreams of service, of life in the country after the war, suddenly became unimportant and not worth striving for. Something new and unintelligible had matured in him and he was at pains to give it a form, as he listened unconcernedly to the fussy old woman's complaints and groanings. He begged her not to bother and to let events take their course. She informed him that he was under arrest for three days. That did not upset him. The streets of Petersburg and cheerful encounters with the young men frivolously celebrating the departure of the French suddenly lost all their attraction for him. "No, I ought not to strive to be among the 'fortunate thousand' that that Frenchman, what's his name? writes about."

So thinking, the Lieutenant kissed the hand of his weeping aunt and returned to his cell.

The Captain was sitting by the window and reading a small leather volume, on the back of which was the inscription: "*Discours sur l'origine de l'inégalité parmi les hommes.*" The Lieutenant was not fond of reading. His reading was confined to novels and educational text-books, which developed his knowledge of foreign languages. The Captain laid Rousseau's book aside, thereby showing his willingness to enter into conversation.

The absurdity of the Gruzino affair and the Captain's stories stimulated the

Lieutenant and, instead of observing that "double caution with strangers" which Arakcheyev had spoken of, he gave way to an impulsive frankness. Without mentioning the source, he passed on to his comrade in confinement the ideas and observations he had gathered from the letters captured from the French. To his surprise, the Captain showed no excitement. He listened in silence, nodding his head in approval, and the cold, set face of a man who had grown accustomed to stern discipline grew more and more gentle, thoughtful and serious, until in the end it was quite unrecognizable. He made no observations, he only asked questions, but the further the talk proceeded, the more interesting these questions became, and in replying to them Shirkhanov suddenly realized that new horizons were opening out before him.

Towards evening came the unexpected announcement that Lieutenant Shirkhanov's arrest had been cancelled.

"Your grandmother has been working her magic on your behalf," the Captain said to him.

"My aunt rather," replied the Lieutenant with a bashful smile.

Shaking the hand of the comrade he was about to leave, Shirkhanov expected that the Captain would mention his name. But he did not do so. Nevertheless the Lieutenant proposed that they should meet again after his release and with the frankness peculiar to the young expressed his sympathy for him. The Captain smiled and said:

"You need to clear your head with some good reading. Read the books I mentioned to you. And when the time comes, perhaps we'll see each other again. Only remember: once you've had the right ideas about the attributes of a free man, you can no longer tolerate the shameful slavery of our country, and bear in mind that the keen eyes of invisible friends will keep watch on you."

With these words they parted.

Next day the Lieutenant was ordered to join the Akhtyrsky Regiment of Hussars and to catch up with them on the way to Kovno. In the Petersburg "Department of post-chaises and britskas" only outside seats remained. He was forbidden to go in his own carriage. Having said good-bye to sobbing Natasha and his aunt, who were beside themselves with grief, he wrapped his head in a Caucasian hood and drove in a hired sleigh to the gates of the city. An hour later he was in an army post-kibitka dashing along the Kovno road.

## CHAPTER EIGHT

CONTRARY TO THEIR OWN EXPECTATIONS, BEYLE'S JOURNEY IN COMPANY WITH Olivieri by night along the road to Wilkowszki was going well. Extreme exhaustion and sleepiness were a natural reaction to the heavy impressions of the previous day. To Beyle the departure for Europe was a relief from the nightmares of a country, which seemed to him to be a combination of all that was horrible: the climate, the barbarism, and the misfortunes of the army. And, as always happens after a long journey, when the last miles seem to be the heaviest, so, on this occasion, driving along the road towards Memel, Beyle felt exceedingly tired. Firmly he controlled his nerves, which were crying out that all the dangers had not yet been passed and that he might perish at the very gates of Europe.

The road which his guide had chosen ran through dense forests which swept from Lithuania to the virtually unexplored region of the Masurian lakes;

here and there it tailed off into barely perceptible wild animal tracks which in summer were almost impassable for human beings, as at every turn there were swamps, stretches of water, and treacherous bogs, to say nothing of the thick swarms of gnats.

The guide was evidently well acquainted with this route—after a bear there is nobody like a smuggler for knowing his way about a dense forest.

Olivieri had already unwittingly revealed his true métier. His energy and drive gave Beyle confidence in the possibility of reaching safety. Beyle fell into a profound sleep and was roused by a sudden jolt.

The horses were standing still. Opening his eyes, Beyle looked around and saw a dense clump of reeds covered in frost. Olivieri made a warning sign. The smooth, level surface of ice was just visible through the reeds. In a minute or so came the sharp clatter of hooves on ice. Next moment there was a crackling sound followed by a tremendous splash. Then came the neighing and snorting of horses and curses, in which Beyle recognized Russian words, with which he was already familiar. Then all was silent.

"They've drowned," said Olivieri. "Let's go on."

The boy led the horses out on to the road. Olivieri related what had happened. Two Cossacks had been pursuing them along the road, and there was nothing left to do except go down to the lake and then, near the first patch of unfrozen water by the bank, turn sharply into the reeds.

"I've often tried that trick," Olivieri went on. "When a Cossack or a frontier guard lets his horse go, he never regulates the pace."

"Where are we?" asked Beyle.

"These are the Masurian lakes," replied the Italian. "Actually we are in Germany. I am taking a sharp northerly direction on purpose so as not to meet anybody. I heard that the patrols of the Cossack Platov have already been roaming about everywhere for several days."

The Commander of the partisans, the Cossack Platov, who had been given the title of Count and combined it with the profession of a real bandit, was terrorizing the French rear. His unmounted Cossacks—"platoons"—covering themselves in the autumn with sheaves of corn and straw, crept forward and suddenly appeared to sow disorder in the ranks of Napoleon's tirailleurs. Bearded dissenters who formed Platov's cavalry, emerging from cover behind the fringe of a forest, would swoop down like a whirlwind on a French formation. Afterwards, having set up their field chapel in the shape of a tent, they listened to the prayers of a fugitive priest, crossed themselves with two fingers, and sang in unison church hymns in dreary bass and tenor voices, drawling them out and mingling with the singing certain non-human sounds, resembling both the howling of wolves and the wail of wintry blizzards.

Driving across level stretches of ground with occasional small hills, Beyle felt a great change in his mood. The mists, the nearness of the Baltic Sea, the smooth surface of the lakes, the grey, frosty lines of the horizon—all this appeared to him new and attractive. These were the approaches to Europe, the still wild, Baltic wastes, inhabited by Masurians. "But it is no longer Russia," he said to himself, and this sufficed to cheer him up.

In the mist on a hill a long way off three streaks of coloured light began to flash before his eyes. Beyle shuddered: "Is that a semaphore working over there?" There could be no mistake: "Yes, it's an army heliograph transmitting a dispatch!"

Olivieri gazed with his keen, bird-like eyes at the light-signals, which changed

colours, winked, flashed up, and drew streaks through the frosty, greyish-blue mist. Olivieri knew the meaning of every stroke, every dot. He well remembered the attractive work of an army signaller. In Lithuania he was able, without referring to the alphabet of the engineer Chappe's code, to transmit to a neighbour scout information about the passage of every Russian detachment, the appearance of a patrol on the fringe of a forest, the occupation of a village by grenadiers or the position of guns on a height—all this he was able to transmit by signalling with the smoke of two, three or more rows of beacons lit on the slopes of the Lithuanian forests.

But this message in the depths of the Masurian lakes seemed to him an incredible phenomenon, the more so as trying to make out the strokes, dots and colours, he failed to understand their combination; the familiar words did not come from the familiar letters. He turned to Beyle for an explanation and began to spell each signal to him. Two minutes later Beyle had made out ten German words:

"... Marshal Ney retreating . . . remnants . . . Vilna . . . Russian troops . . . Napoleon . . . not known. . ."

"What is it?" exclaimed Olivieri.

"The message of a German spy. The Germans are delighted at the defeat of the Grand Army," replied Beyle, yawning.

"Incredible! What has become of the Emperor? They will pay for this work!"

"Tell me, Olivieri, did I sleep soundly?"

"You slept fifty-six hours without eating or drinking. I couldn't rouse you at any of the halting places and was beginning to get alarmed. A friend of mine once slept like that and didn't wake up for two months."

Beyle was astonished. His habit of keeping a constant, precise check on himself was the one peculiarity of his which he particularly prized. Just now he had been certain that he had only slept about an hour and a half. It meant there were some things he did not know about himself.

Olivieri gazed at the point on the horizon where the signals had just ceased. They were not renewed. There was nothing to indicate the proximity of a large populated point. Evidently the signals came from some forester's cottage or the lodge of a Baltic German landowner.

"After the losses sustained in Russia, one must expect great changes in the behaviour of the unwilling allies of France," thought Beyle. These thoughts poisoned his mood for the rest of the journey.

"Anyway, you ought to eat something," said Olivieri.

Taking from his bag a large hunk of grey bread and a thick slice of smoked pork, he offered them to Beyle.

In spite of the fact that the pieces were enormous, Beyle ate them almost mechanically without any sense of discomfort.

Olivieri looked at him in astonishment. The Corsican, who had retained the peculiarities of his race, was a moderate eater. A short while after he had eaten the food, Beyle felt the warm blood course through his veins; he heard a humming noise in his head and fell asleep again.

He woke up in the room of a post-station. Olivieri shook him by the shoulder, and offered him a glass of vodka. The yellow light of the lamp cast a huge shadow of the Corsican on the log wall. It was warm in the room and there was a sound of voices. Beyle drained the glass at a gulp and sprang up immediately as though he had been jolted. At a small table by the opposite

wall sat a French officer, marking with his finger-nail red dots on a map that lay before him.

"Well, do you recognize me or not?" he said to Beyle. "You've been here a good couple of hours. Your guide has told me where you have come from."

Yes, of course, Beyle recognized him: he was the same Parisian gay spark Balthassar Marchand, with whom Beyle used once upon a time to spend the evenings in the company of Pierre Daru and the Bécheville young men. Now he was in the uniform of a War Commissary, but in contrast to so many of his compatriots who had grown old in the Russian campaign, he had filled out on German food and had a self-satisfied air. Beyle greeted him and willingly agreed to Marchand's suggestion to continue his journey in the post-kibitka, which had been harnessed with fresh German horses. Beyle was all the more pleased at this, as Olivieri whispered into his ear that he was now obliged to leave him and return to Vilna.

"I have carried out all that I was ordered to do, and I am going to become a café proprietor once again. The Russians won't enjoy Vilna for long. We shall have a lot of work to do. Kutuzov has probably set up cross-beams there, on which are strung up the Jews who refused to let the Russian officers have wine on credit."

"Think of a way in which I can thank you, Olivieri."

"Don't mention my name in Koenigsberg. And when you are in Milan, give my greetings to my sister Vittoria and my aunt, if you stay as before at Casa Bovara."

Paying no attention to the fact that Olivieri was conversing in a low voice with Beyle, garrulous Marchand bombarded Beyle with questions and, not the least disconcerted at getting no reply, told him all about his successes in Pomerania.

Beyle wanted to say something else to Olivieri. He was prepared to turn his back to Marchand, but a curious feeling of absent-mindedness and a certain heaviness in his legs from the vodka he had drunk restrained him.

The Corsican shook him warmly by the hand and went out of the room, leaving his fellow-traveller with a feeling of regret, a sense of not having completed some business, and a feeling that he would soon return.

Talking to the servants, Beyle switched over to German with some difficulty. Gradually coming to himself, he contrived to elude the persistent questions of Marchand, who tried his utmost to get information from him about the disastrous events of the great retreat. Beyle set about asking questions in his turn, and Marchand, in giving an account of the state of French affairs in Germany, showed that he was far from being a frivolous talker when he gave this characteristic description:

"After a surgical operation an organism does not immediately get accustomed to the sense of loss even of an amputated leg. Evidently we too will not get accustomed to our loss of blood immediately. And as Germany is connected with the blood circulation of the whole organism of our Empire, she also will not react to French affairs immediately. A good many months will pass. During that time the Emperor will restore the position. He is phenomenally resilient."

The road to Koenigsberg was not remarkable for anything. Gradually Beyle's sleepiness passed. The keen excitement of the Vilna days gave place to a flat and wearisome depression; the clean German post-stations, which were

kept in good order in spite of being in the war zone, had an enervating effect on him. He had to make special efforts not to give way to it.

Early in the morning of 14th December Henri Beyle and Balthassar Marchand, having passed the battlements and high towers of Koenigsberg, entered the town.

"It was here that the philosopher, Emmanuel Kant, died eight years ago. With his name in my thoughts, as the symbol of the great intellectual heights which I am once again ascending, I enter Europe," thought Beyle. He took leave of his companion Marchand and rented a small room in a neat and comfortable German hotel.

"The first thing is to order a bath, then shave, then unsew the double chamois pockets of the fur coat. No, I think I'd better start with that."

A servant who came in asked whether the highly respected Colonel would like a ticket for the theatre. Oh yes, of course he would like one! "La clemenza di Tito," Mozart's opera with Metastasio's libretto, was being performed to-day. Yes, yes, of course he would go to the theatre. But first of all was it not possible to get some clean linen in Koenigsberg? It was? Very good!

Having ripped open the chamois, Beyle took out the money, a razor and a bundle of paper. These rolled-up sheets of paper turned out to be part of his Moscow diary. For some quite unknown reason, he suddenly remembered that before he set out for the Russian campaign, his sister Pauline had sewn some forty-franc gold pieces in the belt of his army overcoat. "Well, it seems I paid the Vilna smuggler well for the horses," he reflected, shaking his head as he recalled his hasty preparations for departure with Olivieri and how he had given his army overcoat with the coins to the smuggler. To dispel his regret about the money, he began to peruse his diary.

"Is it possible that I wrote this?" he exclaimed.

"Little more than two months have passed," he reflected, "and I feel that centuries lie between me and the day when these notes were written. How colourless this diary is! How improvident and self-satisfied I was in Moscow! How I failed to understand anything! Where is the least allusion here to those emotions, unknown to me then, aroused by unbearable suffering, personal danger and the sight of the misfortunes of vast masses of men! Then all had reckoned on a swift and victorious end of the war. Nobody doubted success. That's why my ideas did not rise above the collar of my uniform. My emotions were no more prepared for the dangers of that terrible country than the crimson uniforms of the Hussars and the white cloth capes of Murat's Neapolitan soldiers were for the frosts of Vilna and the swamps of Polesye.

"Yes, I must think and have a good rest in Koenigsberg in order to understand all that has happened to me."

After these cheerless reflections and half-cynical references to himself, Beyle began to pace up and down the room while waiting for the servant to bring him the hot water for shaving. On a small table lay some old German newspapers. A line printed in large letters with the word *Borodino* attracted his attention. He began to read and was surprised to find that the German Press regarded the battle of Borodino as one of the greatest battles in history. In bombastic rhetorical phrases the German journalist told how the serried columns of French troops attacked the Russian fortifications with bands playing and banners flying. Beyle tossed the newspaper away in disgust. Checking up on himself and recalling all that he had heard, he could not at all understand that the battle of Borodino was actually an engagement over a huge area; he was

unable to co-ordinate his scattered impressions of the battle. Separate groups of men, thin, drawn out chains of tirailleurs, running bent double across a field with their bayonets at the ready, the rumble of gunfire and dark clods of flying earth—there was no crowding; on the contrary, the areas were thinly occupied, there was no hint of dense masses of men occupying huge areas and stabbing one another with their bayonets.

According to Beyle's own observations, only small groups came into conflict, and only in cases when it was impossible for them to show their backs to one another, some soldiers stabbed others so that their own artillery should not shoot them with grape-shot.

"However," thought Beyle, "the technique of military reports requires such summaries and false pictures which basically distort the reality of war. One must bear in mind that the heliograph transmits dispatches to the rear over vast distances much more rapidly than a mounted orderly delivers information to the Staff from the battlefield. I myself can remember that a semaphore message was transmitted from a ship at sea, from Brest to Paris, by ordinary heliograph in seven minutes, whereas only one of the three aides-de-camp sent from the Cheverino redoubt reached the Emperor's headquarters; two were killed. When the survivor rode up to the Emperor, the battle conditions had already changed. How stupid is the newspaper myth that information is conveyed to Napoleon with lightning speed!"

Beyle was worn out. The desperate tension of the last few months had left him. He sought and failed to find restorative impressions.

In the Commandant's department they talked about the disappearance of Generals and War Commissaries on the way to Koenigsberg. They talked about the ominous attitude in Germany and the terrible cold which was destroying the army. A Koenigsberg restaurateur complained that certain brands of wine had frozen in the cellars. This had not happened for six to ten years. An officer in the Commandant's department stated that the corpses were being pushed off the road with poles and that they resounded under the blows like pine logs under the axe. In the hotel an old German woman whispered that four hundred thousand families were weeping in Europe, knowing that they would wait in vain for their children, fathers, brothers and husbands. The most persistent talk was about the forthcoming new French levy.

"It is impossible to get away from war impressions anywhere. Russia is already far away, but every nerve cell is numbed by her cold and the sense of death. Such is the reaction to the excessive loss of strength and constant strain," concluded Beyle apropos his own condition. Two more days went by, but his strength did not return. He was unable to take himself in hand and come to any decision.

On the morning of the third day he left the hotel with firm steps. On reaching a little church, he turned the corner and knocked on the door of a small house. There he went up to the second floor. He was received with courtesy and shown the room where the great philosopher had died. Beyle looked in at the study, which was lined with book-cases: the gilt backs of the leather volumes of Rousseau's works gazed at him through the glass doors of the book-cases.

Through the windows of the study could be seen the slender spire of a high-gabled church lit up by the sun's rays.

There was another visitor in the room. He greeted Beyle politely and said he was Count Wangel. Under his grey cloak gleamed the buttons of a General's

overcoat. General Wangel's eyes, calm and intelligent, had a cold, radiant light, like chips of ice. Grey moustaches covered his lips and concealed his chin.

"You are honouring the memory of the late Professor Kant?"

"Yes, although I have not had time to study him as I should like," replied Beyle.

"Look over there," said Wangel, "that church was the object of the Professor's special affection. He used to relate that when he was writing *Prolegomena* and the *Critique of Pure Reason* that shapely spire was the point on which he fixed his gaze in order to concentrate. One day a neighbour erected a stone fire-wall, which blocked Professor Kant's view of the church. It was from that time exactly that Professor Kant began work on the *Critique of Practical Reason*, which, as you know, is a complete surrender of the positions gained with so much labour by human genius in the *Critique of Pure Reason*. It cost Kant a fairly big sum to purchase the fire-wall. He was a long time saving up the money. But when the masons demolished the fire-wall and the church appeared once again before the sage's eyes, he had already lost his keenness of vision. The Copernicus, who had become a Ptolemy, was unable to return to his former path. He re-wrote six times his treatise *On Eternal Peace*, as though he had a presentiment of the conflagration of a world war."

"What you say, General, is exceedingly interesting," replied Beyle. "After all I've been through in Russia . . ."

"Ah, you are from Russia?"

"Yes, and after the impressions I received in that country, I want to take up the study of your philosopher again. I am glad to meet in you a fellow-thinker, as I have always held that the Kantian ethic is, in its essence, the simple gravitation of the feelings, which have triumphed over reason that has ceased to value itself. The attempt to penetrate the transcendental world, in spite of the fact that Kant himself firmly confined the activity of reason within the limits of the real, immanent world, merely shows that he took the desirable for the real. However, I am greatly interested in what you say about Kant working on the problem of perpetual peace."

"I am interested in that in a practical way myself," said Count Wangel. "A month or so ago, after a victory gained by my detachment, I suddenly felt the necessity of giving up the army and getting out of the war in order to settle the question of whether a nation has the right to change the form of life according to which another nation wishes to build up its material and moral existence. Until I have settled that question, I shall not return to the army. I am living here on my estate with my only daughter, Mina von Wangel. If you are not afraid of police looking askance at you, come and see me. We will continue our conversation."

Late that evening, as he was going to bed, Beyle shivered violently. He saw his left hand feeling the pulse of his right hand. Doctor Beyle stood before him and spoke about the transcendental world simply and calmly, proving to him in his own voice that there was *Beyle the phenomenon* of the empirical world, and *Beyle the noumenon* comprehended by reason, the ideal Beyle, who alone could heal him.

"But your pulse is irregular," said Doctor Beyle. "It is quite evident that you are passing into the transcendental world, as you feel and comprehend the *melting away of time*."

"There is no other world, and this is only the effect of fever. I have a fever!" said Beyle aloud, sitting down on the bed.



His teeth were chattering, his back was covered with a cold perspiration. But he derived a feeling of great satisfaction from the fact that he was once again firmly resolved not to give way to illness. Without taking off his other boot, half undressed, he took out of his fur coat a small metal box, in which his sister Pauline had assembled first aid materials, and having picked out a couple of quinine pills, quickly swallowed them. Then he took up a volume of Voltaire's *Facéties* and soon fell asleep with the book in his hand.

## CHAPTER NINE

FROM BERLIN TO THE OLD FRONTIER OF FRANCE, BEYLE JOURNEYED WITH CONSTANTLY changing neighbours in a clumsy express mail coach, a huge vehicle drawn by six good horses, with open seats at the back of the carriage and with decorations in the form of a huge post horn on either door.

Again, as before the war, Beyle felt the wind of Europe blowing on him. Favourable or contrary, it was equally dear to him. Looking drowsily at the red faces and blue noses of the passengers, who were wrapped up in shawls, carried men's muffs in their hands and wore fur-trimmed boots, Beyle slept when the going was smooth and woke up when there were jolts and sharp turns, remaining quite indifferent to the sound of the postilion's horn at the departures, halts and changing of horses.

Even in Berlin Beyle realized that the German talk of his neighbours in the coach became easier, calmer and even slightly louder, as soon as they recognized a Frenchman in their fellow-traveller. "On the other hand, the subject of conversation takes a half turn to the left," Beyle thought. "When Germans recognize a Frenchman they quickly change the subject."

Towards morning on 23rd January, in a little German township, Beyle remembered that he was thirty years old. "Perhaps this is the middle of my life," he thought. "The Russian campaign is the watershed of my years and events of my life. Perhaps it is the steepest height of misfortune. What of it? We will breathe the air of the mountains, where the rivers rise. Only great events could have revealed the human heart to me as it is in reality. Perhaps the cold of the heights has its charm. I feel an independence of heart and complete freedom from passion, but I am perplexed by memories of the extraordinary strength of other inner experiences."

These reflections were interrupted by the conversation of two Germans about the "Tugendbund" organization. They said that the whole of Germany was covered with a network of this organization and that the French police would be unable to cope with it.

On 29th January, while the French diligence made a long halt in a small town a couple of days' drive from Paris, Beyle went for a walk to stretch his legs. He entered an inn which bore the sign of the "Four Winds" and ordered dinner. The entire ground floor of the big house was teeming with people. They were recruits. In a prominent place hung the Imperial decree of 8th January, 1813, on the new levy. The placard announced that 150,000 young men of the 1813 class must join the army, and that the Emperor was forming 100 cohorts from those who were not called up in 1812, and 100 cohorts from those who for one reason or another were not called up in the years 1809-1811.

There was general excitement in the inn. The faces of the half-intoxicated lads were red. The recruits insistently banged the tables with their pewter pots.

talked loudly and shouted abuse in husky voices. There was no trace of the seriousness of the early volunteer detachments of the French army, no trace of their gaiety and enthusiasm.

Beyle knew Buonaparte to be a good administrator with indefatigable energy, who calculated exactly the quantity of stone necessary for repairing the roads over which hundreds of artillery vehicles had to pass; he knew him as a man who skilfully selected the personnel of his administration. He saw in him an expert judge of human material. But now Beyle saw everything in a different light. He doubted whether Napoleon's administration had fulfilled its chief requirement—ability to pluck the hen before it had time to cackle.

There was some crockery in front of Beyle. On a white plate of rather coarse earthenware he read some verses in the middle of a design representing a laurel wreath:

*Montagne, Montagne chérie,—  
Du peuple les vrais défenseurs !  
Par vos travaux la République  
Reçoit la constitution.  
Notre libre acception  
Vous sert de couronne civile.*

On the tureen was depicted a cock standing on a cannon with the inscription:

*Je veille pour la nation ! 1792.*

Beyle was amazed at the survival of these domestic objects, which at one time could have been found in every house and which it was now dangerous to keep even in a private dwelling. It seemed all the more strange, therefore, that the innkeeper should put them on the table in a house which stood at the cross-roads of two coach routes. It might be, of course, that the illiterate gendarmes failed to make out the half-erased inscriptions.

"But the Gallic cock on the cannon knew how to bristle feathers of steel at the first attempt of an alien hand to pluck them. Is it possible that he has now turned into a capon, which allows itself to be plucked without clucking at the top of its voice? All depends on whose hand he will regard as alien."

At a neighbouring table a young man wearing a grey scarf shouted that the priest of his village had never lived so well as he did nowadays.

"Not a day passes without thirty or forty requiem services. He has even bought his neighbour's vineyard!"

The innkeeper was pouring out wine behind the counter. On a perch above his head a magpie was hopping and chattering and beating its wings in the face of a lad, who held out a glass of water to it. Two young farmers and a "man of indefinite occupation" in large spectacles were discussing the Emperor's latest bulletin in fairly loud voices. This was the famous 29th Bulletin of the Grand Army, in which Buonaparte stated that "the horses died in thousands every night on the road from Moscow."

"That's why the Emperor doesn't say anything about the men, the horses have become more valuable!"

"Anyway, I think the horses have become more intelligent than the men." Having made this remark, the man in the spectacles read on.

Napoleon, apparently not realizing how people would react to the bulletin in France, stated that to save the officers it had been necessary to take the horses of the cavalymen and form regiments composed entirely of officers and

squadrons in which colonels followed after sergeants, and generals after squadron commanders. Thus, in saving thousands of officers, the Emperor left to the mercy of fate tens of thousands of dismounted soldiers without transport, food or infantry boots.

"You are threatened with the same fate. The Emperor has surrounded himself with aristocrats who will not allow a simple soldier to be promoted. The times are different now. You win glory, but the officers reap the benefit of it. The Emperor has planted his out-of-work brothers everywhere and made them kings of other nations, and a good many soldiers are needed so that they don't get knocked off their thrones. What was the good of cutting off Louis' head for the sake of that?"

"All the same, Monsieur Vidal, one will have to go to the war," replied the young farmer. "I don't know what has happened since last year, but it seems to me there are now more gendarmes than soldiers. They round up deserters—it is a profitable occupation; but God forbid one should fall into their hands!"

"Then you won't see Catherine any more than your ears."

"Yes, I've already said good-bye to her for ever. But why must you re-open an old sore, Monsieur Vidal? It is better, of course, to be a deserter than a gendarme. A month ago our priest offered to put in a word for me. He asked for a little money and promised to make me a gendarme. But I couldn't have shown myself in my village."

Listening to these arguments, Beyle tried to link together his first new impressions of France. Loud shouts hindered him from making out the rest of the conversation, but it soon came to an end; there was a crash of broken windows, a fight broke out in a corner. Two prostitutes hurried away from a table, towards which staggered a huge soldier brandishing a knife and shouting at everybody to get out of his way. Chaos ensued. Somebody threw a pewter pot and cut open the soldier's face from which blood flowed. The magpie behind the bar took alarm and cried out loud: "Vive l'Empereur!" Beyle made his way to the door, more concerned about the impossibility of paying his bill than about what was going on. As he left the inn, he ran into five tall gendarmes.

One of them said: "Last week two gendarmes were killed at Caillard's inn. It's the deuce of a business! I'm not going in without calling out the reserve!"

"Fool! They haven't yet had their arms issued to them! And besides, they're all so drunk they'll calm down the moment they catch sight of us."

"I think it's time Vidal was arrested. Everybody says he is agitating against the levy," said a third gendarme.

And jingling their spurs, all five went up the steps of the inn with drawn swords.

The bright yellow body of the French diligence, which was packed with passengers busily exchanging the latest war news, received once again the wandering observer Beyle. The journey was intolerably slow in accordance with the transport methods of the period. A steamship, in the shape of a rather clumsy boat with an enormous engine like a samovar and gigantic paddle-wheels, had only recently been tested against the current of the River Seine and rejected by the engineers. In this connection Henri Beyle wrote in his diary: "What a good thing Napoleon did not understand the implication of the steamship. I am too fond of England—the only place where I can find

repose. England—the refuge of exiles of all countries. What would have become of her, if the Emperor had contrived to transport the army to London in steamships?"

Having left Moscow on 16th October, 1812, Beyle reached the Lyons high road only in the January of the following year and entered Paris at half past nine in the morning of 31st January, 1813. Thus it had taken him one hundred and six days to get from Moscow to Paris.

At the gates Beyle took a cab and an hour later was resting after coffee in the rue Neuve du Luxembourg.

Now he was going to take a long rest. . . . He would ride no more either in a saddle or in a kibitka or in a sledge or even in Count Wangel's mahogany sleigh, in which he had driven from Koenigsberg to Dresden, or still less in stage coaches.

Madame Maurice—the old concierge in a sedate lace cap—hardly recognized him, to such an extent had "Monsieur Beyle grown thin, the features of his face sharpened and his eyes become stern."

"Nobody has asked for Monsieur Beyle. There are just a few letters."

"This is from Bergognié. He informs me of his appointment to the office of Prefect of Jura and that Busche has been appointed to the Prefecture of Sèvres." Bergognié wrote that it was necessary to make haste. "We have not been caught napping. Nobody knows what may yet happen. While the others are fussing around in Germany and getting stuck in Poland, we, supporting one another, have made haste to ensconce ourselves as far away as possible from the war. To the devil with it altogether!"

Not a word about Beyle's experiences. Just as though there had been no Berezina, no Vilna. Both these smart fellows had fixed themselves up quite well, without remembering for a moment that Beyle had acquired the right to friendly consideration by Bergognié the day when Beyle pulled him across the river by the arm.

The neglect shown him by his friends was his first disappointment on his return to Paris. But perhaps that good fellow Bergognié was, as usual, only too sure that Beyle would know how to look after himself?

Here was his little room. Books on the table. Madame Maurice had carefully tidied up the apartment. There was not a speck of dust. Only the book-shelf had not been touched and, to his great delight, the twelve copy-books containing quotations and notes on the Italian painters.

"This is a real find!" Beyle had been quite certain that the systematic collection of notes on the history of Italian painting and manners, which he had made on sheets of blue foolscap paper and lost together with the diaries somewhere on the way back from Russia, was the only draft of the work. The copy was intact! This would keep him busy. "What happiness it is to be able to get away for ever from army coarseness, from that company of swash-bucklers! Whoever has been too long in the army is nauseated at the sight of a sword and epaulettes, just as a man who has got drunk on punch is nauseated at the sight of a glass, at the least sniff of the stuff."

Very few people, however, found Napoleon's civil service any better: the Minister Crétet had died of some disease of the bladder; Napoleon would not let him get up from his seat for sixteen hours on end. Three years of such strenuous work had turned a strong healthy man like Crétet into a wreck.

## CHAPTER TEN

ROMAIN COLOMB WROTE TO THE CRITIC, ETIENNE DELÉCLUZE:

Dear Etienne,

Come and see me to-morrow at my new apartment, 3 rue Notre Dame des Grâces. My cousin Henri Beyle, who has returned from Moscow, will be with me in the evening. I met him to-day after many years of separation, and we arranged to spend the evening together in my large room. Invite whoever you wish. There is enough wine. There is cold game and excellent cheese. I noticed that Henri's character has become much more gentle. Evidently his striking and tragic experiences in Russia have made him like that. He asked about your friend Rousse. If you can, go at once to the notary Deloche so as to make sure of Rousse and invite him to my place. Henri says that he wrote to him twice from Moscow to ask him to help that little actress, with whom he used to live in Marseilles. I don't remember her Russian surname. She is called Mélanie. If Rousse is unable to come, please ask him why he has not once been to the rue Neuve du Luxembourg, in spite of Beyle's requests, which were sent from Moscow by special courier. That was the first request which my cousin made to me when I saw him to-day. He himself did not find Deloche's office at its former address.

Henri has lost all his natural liveliness. His eyes have lost their warmth, he speaks little, his calm gestures betray his fatigue. He now has a quiet smile, which was not formerly characteristic of him. I did not even recognize him at first. He was standing on the quay buying books at a second-hand bookseller's stall. Books have always been a passion of his. His frivolity and wildness have disappeared, but this passion for books has remained. Do come, dear Etienne. I know it will interest you to meet Henri again, whom you used to call "the cascade" on account of his tempestuous manner of speaking.

Yours,

ROMAIN COLOMB.

Next evening Etienne Delécluze silently shook Beyle's hand. A few minutes later, addressing Romain Colomb, he said: "Anyway, tell me, how many guests are actually going to forgather here to-night. You didn't mention it in your letter. Unfortunately, Rousse can't come. He says he hasn't received any letters from Moscow. . . .

"Are you having many guests?"

"There will be five. . . ."

"That's good. It's a good thing there won't be twenty! Do you know what Caylus, that General, whom you know, told me the other day? He wanted to celebrate his birthday and went to Véry at the Palais Royal. Véry said to him: 'You know of course, General, that if you assemble ten persons in your house you are obliged to invite to supper a representative of the police who must stay there till the end.' Caylus went red with rage, shrugged his shoulders and went out of the room, rattling his spurs and fuming: 'Did I go and get wounded eight times in war so that those rascals of gendarmes should eat my partridges and interfere with my guests?'

"From the Palais Royal Caylus drove to Monsieur Fouché, otherwise the Duke of Otranto. The crafty Minister of Police received Caylus immediately and in reply to his indignation waved his hands: 'I can't do anything, no matter how many devils you call down upon the heads of my overworked police. What harm will a police officer in civilian clothes, sitting modestly at the corner of the table, do to you?' Caylus stormed. Then cunning Fouché said, as though inspired: 'Well, then, show me the list of the guests you have invited.' Caylus handed him a paper with their names. Fouché glanced at the list and grinned. Handing the paper back to the General, he said with a sigh: 'Well, you have no need to invite people you don't know.' Tell me, Romain," Delécluze went on, "have you also no need to invite people you don't know?"

"A strange kind of joke!" remarked Beyle. "Somehow one doesn't even want to understand what it means."

"No, but all the same, try to get accustomed to the new Paris, my dear wanderer," said Delécluze to Beyle.

"We'll see, we'll see," said Beyle. "I'm dreaming of going away to Milan or Rome without getting accustomed to Paris. I want to busy myself with my *History of Painting in Italy*."

"Is that so? That means, 'I want to write and . . . good-bye to the War Commissary'? But I doubt if the Roman regime will please you very much. If in Spain the Catholics have restored the Inquisition and the ecclesiastical tribunal of the Middle Ages, in Rome the Pope has restored the Jesuit Order. And believe me, the very secret organization of the Jesuits will know how to put out of the way such a free-thinker as you: you won't finish writing your history of painting. And mind you, have yourself vaccinated again. Throughout Italy the priests have forbidden vaccination. Buy a good lantern, because in Rome the clergy will not allow the streets to be lighted, declaring this to be a dangerous manifestation of Jacobinism, but wherever you go, the Jesuits will contrive to light up every nook of your brain with the Inquisitor's torch."

"Forewarned is forearmed," said Beyle. "The Jesuit is, of course, more dangerous than a simple representative of the Roman Church. The Society of Jesus is a remarkable economic organization, but I think that just as clever Ministers fail to maintain themselves under a stupid monarch, so the present Pope Pius VII will fail to extract the fullest advantage from the activity of these secret agents of the Church. Don't forget that Loyola was a soldier, a monk and a fanatic. In the present age when people are profiteering on war supplies and the exploitation of steam machines, and where the only subject of conversation is the mutual support of rogues who have come to terms with each other, it is rather difficult to pave the way for fanaticism. The Jesuit's activity is aimed at getting in good time the signature of a millionaire widow to a will in favour of the Church, or the signature of a decrepit émigré, who is not himself in a position to get back his confiscated property. I consider the Concordat to be a great mistake. The Emperor could have done without taking any steps to bring about a rapprochement with Rome. But since this has happened, it is too late now to shut the doors on the Jesuits. In Poland I read Zacharowski's book, *Monita Secreta*. It is a remarkable work of the seventeenth century. Particularly interesting is the method of confession with its system of permissible sins. The most serious sins are doubts about dogmas, intellectual inquisitiveness and insubordination. Everything else is permitted provided one repents in due season and pays a more or less considerable sum into the coffers of the Church. There you have the whole commercial system of righteousness.

But the system of the subordination of coadjutors, generals, *magistri*, etc., the system in which discipline is raised to an amazing perfection, the system under which you will never recognize in your gay and carefree companion in conversation, whether he be in army uniform or civilian dress, a dangerous Jesuit agent, is remarkable. Subtle masters of intrigue, the Jesuits know how to play on the feminine heart as on a church organ. The various cults of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and other subtle erotic symbols—the devouring of the body of the heavenly bridegroom—are all snares for young and old women, among whom is recruited an ecstatic army of agents who disseminate Catholicism in the family and in society. When Volney begged Napoleon not to negotiate with the Pope, the Emperor said: 'The people want religion.' Volney replied: 'And if the people want the Bourbons, will you give them the Bourbons?' Napoleon kicked Volney in the belly, but Volney was right. I remember the methods by which a counter-revolutionary Abbé taught me in my childhood. He made a thorough study of my character and realized that he couldn't get hold of me in a simple way. Knowing my passion for mathematics, he directed my studies with particular care on this subject. The question arose of parallel lines in trigonometry. The trigonometrical line—a symbol of function—goes off into the infinite and returns with the inverse sign. Here the Abbé began to talk to me about the liquidation of parallelism in space as a miracle and a mystery: in the infinite the parallel lines intersect each other, and the line of the tangent is transformed in returning. With these formulas he tried very cleverly to confuse my mind, make me aware of an unexpected problem and make the intervention of religion inevitable. He tried to play on the fact that science knows no absolute truths and consequently the extent of its influence is limited. But what is unlimited, what is true, who possesses the mystery? Only one man—the Pope! Truths are held only in one place—the Church. I don't remember now all the very subtle methods that were used to force me to these conclusions, which were formulated in no unskilful manner. And if I never for a moment felt any religious sentiment in my heart, I could not escape the bewilderment of having gazed into an abyss. It was characteristic of all the priests by whom I was surrounded in my childhood that they showed a wild and malicious delight in every report of the successes of the monarchist interventionists."

As Beyle was saying this, the door opened noisily and two men, Victor Jacquemont and Mareste, continuing their conversation, came in. Victor Jacquemont was tall and placid, with an ironical smile. The other man, Baron de Mareste, was small with a pointed beard, a wrinkled, putty-coloured face and greenish glassy eyes and gesticulated as he walked. Paying no attention whatever to the conversation that was going on in the room, they said "How d'you do" without interrupting their argument.

Victor Jacquemont greeted Beyle warmly. Captain in a regiment of engineers and a little-known author, Jacquemont was one of Beyle's small number of loyal friends.

"Well," he said to him, "I've been proving to Mareste what is now incontestable, that your beloved 'General-Emperor' after all is an over-rated person, the plaything of chance, a chip on the crest of a wave. Now it has been tossed on to the sands. Mareste with true baronial grandeur, instead of giving me a proper answer, pours out the bile of his wit upon me. You know, Henri, you alone are now able to give a real estimation of events."

Mareste had gone to the window, taken out his note-book and accurately

entered an item of expenditure: "Hire of cab and cigars." Then, putting the note-book away, he began to declaim in a crowing voice incredible praises of Napoleon, but with such a malicious expression on his face, with such bile and earnestness, that it was hard to know whether he was joking or in earnest.

"Listen, my dear baron," Beyle interrupted him. "You have chosen a very bad place for these outpourings. We are not distributing crosses or ribbons of the Legion of Honour."

"I'm quite sure that War Commissary Beyle will bring my words to the knowledge of Monsieur Daru; unless Monsieur Daru goes back to his old occupation of translating Horace. Apparently it happens to be quite appropriate. By the way, is it true, Monsieur le Commissaire des guerres, that Count Daru told the Emperor in good time that the departure of the Emperor from the army would lead to its destruction?"

"And tell us, please," added Jacquemont, "is it true that your belauded Emperor was afraid the Germans might make him a prisoner on hearing of the destruction of his army?"

"Yes, there were a few critical days. On approaching Koenigsberg I saw a heliograph operating. Evidently the German States already knew something when the Emperor was on his way to Paris."

"It's a pity it didn't happen," said Jacquemont. "Well, what are you yourself going to do?"

"A good deal does not depend on me. My own desire is a modest one—I want to take a rest, but not in Paris."

"Why, of course, you're a Milanese," interjected Mareste. "Where else could he go to? Of course he'll go to Lombardy and then, after a rest, he'll fix himself up again comfortably."

"To-day Mareste is like a rat that has managed to bite a cat by the tail," said Beyle. "It does you no good to shake up your gall bladder like that."

"Oho!" said Mareste. "That's the good effect of a rigorous climate. I have not been freezing my bile on Moscow ice."

"It's a pity you weren't there. The Moscow fire would have thawed the icy crust of your brain and made you appreciate not bile in conversation, but logic," said Beyle, emphasizing the last word.

"But where is the logic in this case?" said Mareste, emphasizing the word as Beyle had done. "A new mobilization has been declared, and the War Commissary, you see, deigns to go to Milan, when 'the fatherland is in danger.'"

"Well, everybody has his own idea of the fatherland. You know my views on the subject," said Beyle, and taking a small book from his pocket, he read out: "*L'univers est une espèce de livre, dont on n'a lu que la première page quand on n'a vu que son pays. J'en ai feuilleté un assez grand nombre, que j'ai trouvé également mauvais. Cet examen ne m'a point été infructueux.*"

"What nonsense is that?" exclaimed Mareste.

"When did you manage to buy it? What is it—*Le Cosmopolite* or a book by Byron, who has taken an epigraph from it?" said Delécluze, butting into the conversation.

"I bought it at a book-stall on the quay this morning. It is the amazing work of a new poet. His name is Byron. The poem is called 'The Pilgrimage of Childe Harold.'"

"It's old," said Delécluze. "It came out in March last year."

"Anyway, it is the first time I have made its acquaintance," said Beyle. "I got it from the bookseller only because the words 'the poet Lord Byron



has taken up the defence of the rebel workers of London' have engraved themselves upon my memory. I read that sentence in Vilna, where the local Polish authorities tried in every way to depict the situation in England in a gloomy light. By the by, what was this London revolution about, which was suppressed by thirty thousand horse and foot?"

"What nonsense! The affair was much more simple," said Jacquemont. "The same thing is going to happen here. Steam-driven machinery has displaced three-fourths of the man-power required. Hence unemployment and starvation, as no manufacturer thinks about the fate of dismissed workers. Bread has become dearer at present, especially in England, and moreover we have captured a good number of English ships with cotton cargoes. As the simple result of complicated causes tens of thousands of the poorest English found themselves workless. Realizing that they were faced with inevitable starvation and reasoning badly, they tried to find the causes of their misfortune, decided that the looms were to blame for everything and began to smash them. The owners called in the troops, and the House of Lords proposed that shooting and hanging should be used against the rebellious workers. The author of the book you are holding in your hands spoke in the House of Lords in February last year. I have read his speech in defence of the workers. It is a remarkable speech, although it is not lacking in nonsense, as usually happens when a poet and humanist begins to talk about politics."

"I formed quite a different picture," said Beyle. "I thought the year '93 was beginning in England."

During the conversation Colomb carved up the game and roast and filled the glasses. All began to drink, congratulating Beyle on his safe return. Marcste related some anecdotes, which provoked general laughter. When the gaiety was at its height, Crozet, an engineer of the Department d'Isère, entered the room. Beyle greeted him with a hearty handshake.

"I hope you have already been to see Daru?" said Crozet to Beyle.

"No," replied Beyle.

"I advise you to do so to-morrow," said Crozet, and sitting down close to Beyle he whispered in his ear: "Invent some excuse to slip away from here with me as soon as possible."

"Perhaps you'll tell me what it is about?" asked Beyle.

"I'll tell you when we get outside, but not now!"

## CHAPTER ELEVEN

THEY HAD ALREADY BEEN DRIVING FOR AN HOUR AND A HALF. MAKING ITS WAY slowly along the dirty, crooked, unlighted street, the cab swayed and creaked on its springs. The conversation between Beyle and his companion flagged. Crozet was obstinately silent, giving no answer even to Beyle's most persistent questions. His silence became all the more inevitable owing to the fact that the iron felloes of the carriage grated on the pavement with such a noise that one had to shout in order to make oneself heard. At last Beyle could endure it no longer and cried out: "Here we are at St. Denis already! As you hired the cab to St. Denis, I presume we are approaching our destination. Now tell me what it's all about."

Crozet stopped the cab driver near a small one-storeyed house, paid him his money and ordered him to wait. Beyle and Crozet alighted.

"This is some sort of whim. Bear in mind that if you merely want to have a bit of fun, there is no need to look like a conspirator. In any case I'll pay you out for it, and your angry Praxède will know about your behaviour sooner than you'll be able to lie to her."

Crozet laughed.

"So far you've no cause to be dissatisfied, but I didn't want you suddenly to dash back to Paris, as you might have done if you had known what it was about. A fortnight ago, after great sufferings and breaking with her husband, Mélanie arrived in Paris. Do you want to see her?"

Beyle halted.

"Anyway, not now."

"No, precisely now, before anybody has had time to warn her of your return to Paris. Her window is lit up. There it is, opposite the chestnut-tree. The cab will wait for you, and I will go off on foot."

Beyle went up to the door, then turned back and went resolutely towards the spot where the horses had stood. But the cab had already driven off. Beyle ran in the direction which Crozet had taken. He shouted and called Crozet by name. The little street was deserted. Crozet had disappeared without trace. As it was late, Beyle would have to go back to Paris on foot.

"To go to Mélanie now is quite out of the question," thought Beyle. "If she had wanted to, she could have let them know at the rue Neuve du Luxembourg. Madame Maurice is a reliable old woman. She has a good memory for faces. She would have been sure to have said if anybody had called. But nobody came either from Madame Baskova, or from Madame Guilbert, or simply from Mélanie. So all the letters, requests and suggestions had been useless. How can I go in after that and what shall I talk about? Mélanie is very proud. To come without being asked to a person who has survived so many misfortunes, and not to express one's sympathy or to express it and to give offence—all this is equally bad, unnecessary."

Another ten minutes went by.

"But I shall be an infamous wretch or a coward, if I don't find a way out of the situation," said Beyle to himself. He turned back, lifted the door knocker and knocked loudly.

The door was opened by an old woman in a brown cap. By the light of her candle, she scrutinized Beyle from head to foot. He repeated his question three times.

"My mistress has already undressed and is asleep. However, tell me your name—ah, Monsieur Beyle—then come in. She has spoken about you and told me to let you in as soon as you came."

Beyle sat on a little divan and waited. Two candlesticks with three candles in each were lighted on the table. Fine Marseilles lace covered the windows. A small plate with a piece of cheese, a cup with the remains of some red wine and a piece of bread indicated that somebody had not finished their lonely supper. "What a good thing I have to wait!" thought Beyle. He felt a slight difficulty in breathing, a contraction of the throat. He could not utter a word just then, anyway. And if he had had to speak, it would only have been words of reproach, and then the unhappy scene of the old quarrels at Marseilles would be repeated; and if he uttered some dead empty platitude a crystal crust of ice, forming as in winter on glass, would make the image of Mélanie invisible. He gave a nervous yawn. He felt tired. To prevent himself from dozing, he took a little book from his pocket and began to read the English

verses of the unknown poet Byron, which had delighted him that morning:

Yet oft-times in his maddest mirthful mood  
Strange pangs would flash along Childe Harold's brow,  
As if the memory of some deadly feud  
Or disappointed passion lurk'd below:  
But this none knew, nor haply cared to know;  
For his was not that open, artless soul  
That feels relief by bidding sorrow flow,  
Nor sought he friend to counsel or condole,  
Whate'er this grief mote be, which he could not control.

Mélanie was now in the next room. "Surely she doesn't need to dress herself as though for a concert and waste all this time?" Evidently she had been waiting patiently, so patiently that she had not written a line to him at his apartment, had not even found out whether he was alive. But that cursed Crozet had not said anything! Since he had brought him so boldly to St. Denis, perhaps he was acting on her instructions. Did not the old woman say that Mélanie was expecting him? So she was dressing herself up as for the stage, not knowing that this was out of place now. The only thing which love does not forgive is voluntary absence. He felt he had a fever, not the Koenigsberg attack of illness, which had made him rave, but an altogether different fever which he had long forgotten and which now seemed to him ridiculous. The blood throbbed in his temples at the thought that after a separation of six years Mélanie was hardly likely to have even the shadow of her former sentiment for him.

Thin, long fingers were laid on his eyelids and closed his eyes. Mélanie had crept up quietly from behind, and the hot palms of her hands were pressing his temples and closing his ears. She leaned her cheek against his head.

"How could you think, Henri," said Mélanie, "that I could move into your apartment in your absence? Your letters from Moscow never reached me, and even if Rousse had passed your suggestion on to me, you know how I love independence and freedom. In Marseilles I preferred anyway that you should live at my place and not I at yours."

Keeping his eyes fixed on her, surprised at her freshness and sparkling eyes, admiring the familiar dimples in her cheeks and gazing with delight at her perfect little figure like a Tanagra statuette, Beyle drank in the sounds of her tremulous voice rather than realized the meaning of her words. His own words came in an impetuous torrent. He told how on the day he arrived in Moscow he was possessed by a real madness, an irresistible desire to find her at all costs in that colossal burning Rome of the north. He did not even realize then how absurd was the idea of looking for her among the burning hovels and flaming palaces. He had nearly exhausted himself with his searches, which in the end had become dangerous. He found himself in a cul-de-sac among burning houses. Sparks were falling on to his clothes. It was so hot that the scorching breeze stirred the hair on his head, singed his eyelashes and brows, and but for the Russian peasant Artemisov these searches for Mélanie would have ended in his death. Then he told about his chance meeting with the harpist from Marseilles and how this man had given him all the details of Mélanie's departure from Moscow.

"Henri, it's a very good thing that both for you and for me Russia will be

only a memory. I could never have become a Russian landowner's wife with one hundred and seventy-six souls as slaves. Just think what those words mean: 'one hundred and seventy-six souls'! The soul is a word that means so much to me. But there it means property, a live object which is owned by the landowner, who in the majority of cases has no soul of his own. Baskov was like that."

"Why do you say 'was'?"

"Because he is no more."

"No more for you?"

"No, he simply doesn't exist. The peasants killed him."

"Ah!" said Beyle and stopped.

"It seems I haven't forgotten how to read your thoughts: for me Baskov had ceased to exist long before he ceased to exist among the living."

"But what about your child? Fessel told me . . ."

"After the death of little Adèle, whom you were ready to acknowledge as your own, I had no children, dear Henri. But how forgetful of me! I don't suppose you've had anything to eat?"

"No, I've just come from Colomb's, we were having supper there."

"For you I'll prepare a Marseilles supper again."

Towards morning Beyle, leaning with his elbow on the pillow, gazed in silence at the profile of Mélanie as she lay asleep and went over in his memory all his previous impressions of 1805 and 1806 in Marseilles and the 3rd August, 1806, when he was initiated into the Paris Freemasons' Lodge.

His constant vision was again the little nymph on the green shady bank of the Huveaune, naked and laughing under the splashing water—the Mélanie of those years.

Why, when they raised their glasses last night to their meeting again, did she not once ask him what he was going to do with himself, why did she say nothing about herself or about her life in Paris? She was quite right in saying that their present, very joyful meeting was necessary. He wondered whether this sense of physical happiness which had suddenly taken hold of him would throw him into Mélanie's arms for long.

This strange little creature, who was so strict in her relations with him and so honest in her feelings towards him, denied the possibility of a permanent union with him even now, when she had given herself to him as before. She was right, of course, in saying that this meeting was only "the last figure at the end of the page," implying that the account was finished.

A great figure . . .

For a moment jealousy awoke in Beyle's mind: "How has Mélanie been living, how will she live in the future? She is not silent with others, however silent she has been these past six years."

A thin needle pierced his heart; it chilled him with its coldness; the point broke off. It did not melt, like a bit of ice, but pricked and caused pain. He wanted to kiss Mélanie and to wake her. But suddenly suffused with gratitude towards her, he held back. The chill thawed. What happiness it was to have met her as soon as he returned to France! This night after a happy and carefree evening with her when she had been so simple and so tender had made him realize that his impressions of the war were melting away, the deadening chill in his heart was vanishing and warm blood was flowing once more through his veins.

"Life is good. I must get back to life. To-morrow there will be music,

the magnificent Louvre, pictures and engravings and the remarkable young English poet to read . . . Byron was a gift of fate!"

He dressed quietly and sat down at the window. His imagination pictured the gates of Milan with the inscription : *Alla valorosa armata francese!* the huge walls dotted with people, the Milanese women in bright, multi-coloured dresses, waving their sunshades, the children in broad-brimmed hats, the men in white stockings and shoes with bows—all these were shouting, scattering flowers, rejoicing and making merry on the occasion of the entry of the French and the departure of the last Austrians from Milan. That was a long while ago. The Paris of to-day, gloomy and dirty, with unpaved streets, crooked bridges, recruiting notices, and sombre faces spoke of the fact that new times had come. "Even though new times have come, I have never felt so full of life as to-day," he replied to his thoughts. "But Mélanie is right. I should say that the face of the universe is changing and time is melting, like those clouds in the bright sky. I do not recognize my sentiments, I do not recognize the people and objects, although they have the same names and contours."

After jotting down a few lines to Mélanie, Beyle left the little house and walked back to Paris. The wind ruffled his hair. He carried his three-cornered hat in his hand and bathed with pleasure in the stream of light. He breathed with full lungs, and a feeling of vast, incredible freedom made his step energetic, assured and steady.

On 19th March, having finished his regular page of the *History of Painting*, Beyle began for the hundredth time to sort out his papers.

He wrote in the copy-book, which he kept in the name of Battalion Commander Costa: "Mélanie showed all the signs of a great happiness. She is filled with a sense of life and interest in all its details." After writing this, he reflected with satisfaction that his former friend had found herself again and did not need him. It was a strange and contradictory sentiment: seeking love and fleeing from it. . . . He made a note in the margin that all his friends were getting administrative appointments. He noted that he would not agree to become a Prefect and to go to some provincial hole with a population of six thousand.

In tearing up the papers in some old portfolios, he found a letter which was apparently very old:

Do you know what embarrasses me in your letters? Your excuses. In your place I would be more trustful and frank; it is for you to know which is the most necessary. Have I ever reproached you for the familiar tone you sometimes adopt in writing? Ah! don't you know that this tone suits my heart as well as the whole of me and that you must not fear to displease me by giving me such a mark of friendship.

I have a good many troubles, the same as you, and moreover a good deal of anxiety. My health is not good and I feel that it is impossible for me to bear for long the exhausting business of appearing in tragic roles. My chest is not strong enough and I have been in great suffering for several days. These successive misfortunes irritate me. It seems to me there is too much injustice in my fate. If I were alone, I think I would end by giving up a life which is beginning to be a burden to me. But if I were no more, what would become of my poor little girl? My God! it is cruel, indeed, to be the victim of relentless events, not to be able, after four years of study and sacrifice, to succeed in a project which reason, honour and

refinement led me to entertain ! Ah ! If you knew what sort of consolation I receive ! It all comes down to a single point which it is not hard to guess and this idea, the very idea that a man could be so low as to take advantage of an unfortunate circumstance makes me detest him. No, I dare not admit to myself what I see : I would have to hate those whom I loved the most. Do you realize how terrible that is ? How disgusted I am with the world !

You wrote to M. Mante that if I died, you would look after my little one. I know that M. Baskov loves her as his own daughter. But after all he too may die and so I recommend her to you. Love her, do you hear ? She will have the same gratitude to you as her mother would have had. How grateful I am to you for having thought of that poor little *Mélanie* ! And to have spoken about her to your dear sister ! I shall never forget that. Adieu, my tears are beginning to flow ; I must leave you.

Beyle could not remember when he had received this letter of *Mélanie*'s from Marseilles. Again the sense of fleeting time took possession of him. He was unable to recreate even in his imagination a single one of his feelings. The *Mélanie* of those days and the present one were quite different.

Exactly a month later, to the day, Beyle received orders to go to Germany on military business. His request to be retired was declined.

It was with new feelings that he toured round the towns and along the roads of Germany. He did not recognize the world, did not recognize the familiar people. Everything was called by its old name, yet everything was strange. With the eyes of a man who had been reborn he arrived in Dresden, having just gone through the paroxysms of a horrible fever at Sagan. The fever had blotted out his memory of the old France. The past seemed like the story of someone else's life which he had read some time or other.

In order to pull himself together and to gain insight into what was happening to him, he yielded to the advice of the army doctors and went away on short leave. He crossed Lombardy and paid whirlwind visits to the cities before returning to Paris. His request to be retired was again unsuccessful.

Both in Italy and in France he had the same strange, elusive feeling : all the names and contours were as before, but he failed to recognize anything. Was Henri Beyle himself new, or had the whole world become new ? The quickened emotion that he was living in the spring-time of a new age, that he was a participant and creator of it, had given way to a foreboding that he was at the end of an epoch and to a gripping fear that the hopes he had entertained were unrealized and perhaps unrealizable.

## CHAPTER TWELVE

BY THE AUTUMN OF 1813 NAPOLEON'S ARMY AGAIN REACHED THE FIGURE OF FOUR hundred thousand men. Against him marched the combined forces of Russia, Prussia, Austria, Sweden and Great Britain. This was the fourth and last coalition. Having begun with political action against the French revolution, the monarchs of Europe ended by trying to put down the French Emperor. This year, which had begun with varying fortunes for Buonaparte, ended with the defeat of the French troops in the "Battle of the Nations" at Leipzig between 16th and 19th October, 1813.

If ten per cent of the Grand Army which crossed the Niemen was composed

of penal battalions consisting of recidivist-deserters and the numerous inhabitants of the French prisons, in the Leipzig battle it was discovered that strong and healthy soldiers, who composed the basic cadre of the new levies, were wounded in a very strange fashion: twenty per cent had self-inflicted wounds, that is, the soldiers had trivial wounds, a hand shot through, a finger shot off, the muscles of the foot shot through, which gave them the right to leave their unit for the dressing station and even simply not to return to their unit. In the regiments were discovered the representatives of a peculiar new profession—old soldiers, who, for a comparatively small payment, were expert at getting their young comrades out of the line by means of a slight wound.

Meanwhile Alexander I with his faithful friend Arakcheyev was working in the evenings on the drawing up of some unusual plans. The opinion of the monarchs of Europe regarding the strength of the Russian arms flattered Alexander. The Russian army did not represent anything in the nature of a solid block, but in each of the Allies' occupying armies there were Russian corps, considered to be the most reliable units. And the commanders of the allied troops with the greatest readiness accorded the Russian peasant in uniform the opportunity to die from French cannon balls and bullets in the front ranks of the Allied armies. The Tsar of Russia usually passed the time with Baron Stein and Arakcheyev. This beautiful friendship of the three politicians had a special purpose. The German Minister Stein was at the same time the head of the Russian civil authorities appointed by Alexander in Lithuania, Poland and throughout the territory of Germany. Stein carried on propaganda in the French rear. He was biting off large lumps of Napoleon's army, bribing soldiers to desert. Arakcheyev was carrying on negotiations with the French commanders, bargaining with them through special agents regarding the methods and dates of payment for the work of disrupting the army.

On 31st December, 1813, Henri Beyle received orders to leave for the south of France together with the Commissary Extraordinary St. Vallier to inspect the frontier of Savoy. Beyle went unwillingly, but St. Vallier turned out to be an excellent travelling companion, a clever talker and an inveterate idler. Grimacing, gesticulating and rolling his eyes, he asked Beyle to get him out of a difficult situation:

"I don't understand the southerners at all, my friend, do everything yourself. I bow before your military talents."

And now, suddenly livening up after a year of slackness and boredom, Beyle burned with the fire of determination. His companion from Grenoble to Carouge—Romain Colomb—wrote of him in complete admiration: "Henri has clear and lively eyes, which have such a magnificent gleam of mockery and quickly take in what they gaze at! One discerns in him a warm and lively sensibility when those rather unusual, at times blue, at times amethyst eyes pass from the writing-table, on which lie rough sketches, to the Senator Saint-Vallier. As an excellent topographer, Beyle makes these sketches himself: small and large cartographic sketches of the mountain localities east of Grenoble. The work is in full swing. Beyle carries out the levies, regulates the movement of the detachments, but mainly devotes himself with interest and curiosity to the great game to which Napoleon himself first introduced him. Though petty annoyances sometimes make Beyle raise his eyebrows—his usual way of expressing annoyance—this does not last long."

Buonaparte's decree on Beyle's appointment added the noble particle "de" to his surname. And when printed notices with the signature of Commissary

Extraordinary "de Saint-Vallier" and "de Beyle" appeared in the streets of his native town, the local shopkeepers, a hairdresser and a young abbé vied with one another in trying to scratch out the particle "de" on the notices. One day Beyle received a notice in an envelope. Opposite the particle "de" was an enormous question mark and there was written in large letters: "Is this a misprint or a misplaced joke in the serious circumstances in which we are placed?"

These were the petty stings of provincial mosquitoes. Much worse was the trouble with his father. Old Chérubin was less cherubic than ever; indeed, he was positively diabolical. He denied having received from his son the letters written under the signature of "Chaumette" in which Henri asked him to expedite "the business known to both."

"You're giving yourself a lot of trouble for nothing. The Emperor won't make you a baron, and the business about which you wrote . . ."

"Ah, so you received my letters from Moscow, after all?"

"No, you silly donkey! I did not receive your Chaumette correspondence. But anyway everything was quite clear even without them. You reckon on getting the title of baron and want me to allot to you the eldest son's portion of the inheritance. You know that I am a landowner, but not a nobleman, that I am willing to injure Pauline and Zinaïde for your sake, you devil. But you must pay me back the money I spent on buying up the noblemen's estates ruined by the revolution. You will pay me forty-five thousand francs for the estate I bought from Salvaing, and while he is alive and occupies the house in the Place Grenette, you will have the upper storey, and pay one thousand two hundred francs for it. And afterwards you will pay six hundred francs to my dear Madame Guinet. I want to live a long time and at your expense!"

The old man was implacable. The conditions were so severe that Beyle complained to Saint-Vallier and Colomb at supper of his father's extraordinary greed. At the same time "the old man goes as before now to Claix, now to Saint-Ismier; in all the estates—both at the dairy farm and at the wine lodge—he is waited on by pretty peasant girls. A lusty old boy. He doesn't begrudge money for that!"

"What do you want with this cursed Grenoble?" asked Romain. "There is always peace when Aunt Séraphie doesn't see you."

"Yes, my aunt and my father . . . It's an amazing alliance. It's a sort of heavenly senate. Two angels. Cherubim and seraphim. Swedenborg's hell, where all are united in the name of hatred and not in the name of love. I am deeply convinced that my aunt has persecuted me all my life merely because I alone guessed her liaison with my father after my mother's death. How unlike were the characters of my mother and her sister Séraphie! I was nine years old when my mother died. She was infinitely good, extraordinarily gentle. I still cannot explain the strange feeling that came over me every time I saw her lively eyes, palpitating bosom and amazing round elbows, as though moulded, with little dimples. My mother was the most beautiful woman I have ever known. She was intelligent, she was full of lively interests, refined taste. In her room at the Gagnons' there were a great many Italian books, albums of souvenirs of Rome and the music scores of Neapolitan songs. And beside this beauty was her sister Séraphie! A horrid creature!"

"Come now, Henri! You did everything to make her dislike you. She always said you were upsetting the family authority. Remember—anyway, you can't remember it, but she remembers it quite well—you were in your



cradle, Madame Pison du Galland wanted to kiss you and you bit her cheek till it bled. They called you bloodthirsty. You aunt is always talking about your tricks. When her friend Chenavaz was walking along the pavement, you dropped a kitchen knife from the balcony and nearly killed her. You were only three years old, and your aunt is convinced that you still have these propensities. She still says you'll end your days on the gallows or behind prison bars."

Saint-Vallier, who was writing a letter at the dinner table, burst into laughter. The family conversation ceased. Romain let in a young man, who came from the seventh division. He was a secret agent. He reported that weapons were disappearing every day in the division and that not all the officers reacted in the same way to this. He also said that there were Jacobins in the division, and that the partisans of the Bourbon princes were agitating against the Emperor. This information tallied with the reports from other army units. Beyle recollected his conversations with the generals at Carouge. He had noticed how the officers talked with one another in a whisper, secretly. He had noticed the expression of their eyes: some of them had a concentrated and piercing look, that strove to find out what was in the mind of the man with whom they were conversing. Others did not like to look one in the eye and frowned; when making reports, they averted their eyes. Simplicity and the usual army confidence in one another no longer existed among the commanders.

Beyle and Colomb had recently been at Carouge and got away just in time. Early in the morning an Austrian cannon-ball had pierced the roof and shattered the attic of the house where they had been staying. Nevertheless the counter-espionage department had reported in plain terms that Austria had no desire to move forward either on the Savoy frontier or in any other front. Buonaparte, now possessing only a small army of select troops, had acquired incredible mobility. From 29th January to 2nd February pursuing Blücher in five places, from the rear, from the front, from the flanks, he completely broke up his large, heavy army with his small detachments. Saint-Vallier was enthusiastic about everything. Most of all because he himself was not obliged to do anything. He signed documents about the state of the Savoy frontier and made no objection to an incautious phrase of Beyle's that "there were no reasons, apart from the unwillingness of the Austrians, why France should not be invaded from the south. The Austrians were not marching, although the French generals were ready to let them through any moment." The Empress Marie-Louise was the daughter of the Emperor Franz of Austria. If Buonaparte was an upstart, the little King of Rome, the son of Napoleon and Marie-Louise, was nevertheless an Austrian prince. The Austrians positively did not wish to be active participants in the coalition! "The possibility is not excluded that the Austrian corps will be replaced by Swedes and Russians," thought Beyle. "Then the road to Paris will immediately be opened through the gates of Savoy." This idea made him gather up the secret documents and hasten to Paris to report personally to Napoleon.

The diligence of Monsieur Bonafous set out in the night. The Orleans highway, bordered with trees, was deserted. It went farther and farther away from the bank of the river, on which were seen islands and an old tower—witness of the exploits of the bastard of Orleans and of the death of the English commander Suffolk, who fell from the bridge into the river during the battle with Joan of Arc. The conical roof of the tower slipped farther and farther away into the darkness and stood out like a black silhouette in the distance.

The horses' shoes clattered, the cracking of the whip and the shouts of the postilions resounded. Beyle and two silent bourgeois, sitting inside the yellow body of the carriage, did not break their silence. Thus they drove till the first change of horses, when Beyle's two fellow-travellers got out. Beyle remained alone. A postilion shouted to the coachman: "Monsieur Bonafous said that this is the last diligence to Paris. To-morrow the journeys will cease."

"Why is that?" thought Beyle, reluctant to ask. Wearing civilian clothes, a low black top-hat, a topcoat with a huge cape coming down almost to his waist, he wanted to look inconspicuous as he was carrying secret documents, and this time he was particularly cautious. In the big pocket beside his left thigh lay a loaded pistol, which he took with him on the advice of Colomb, although there was no sense in it. True, there was a rumour that deserters were holding up the night diligences. "Ah, yes! It was Bonafous himself who spoke about attacks, probably only to justify charging double fare." With these sceptical thoughts Beyle pulled the top-hat over his brow, touched the sewn-in documents with his hand, leaned his head against the side of the diligence, by old habit in such a way as not to crush his top-hat, and fell into a sound sleep.

He woke up from the cold. It was a damp, misty morning. The fine rain looked like a net of tulle. The springs of the carriage were creaking slightly. A damp and penetrating mist rose here and there over the fields and vineyards. Looking out of the windows, Beyle noticed under the mist on the highway disorderly, snake-like ribbons that filled the whole of the road from the cross-ways as far as the horizon. A strange din could be heard, the shoes of thousands of horses were striking the stones. It seemed to Beyle that he was about to have another attack of the terrible fever with which he had been smitten at Sagan. He pinched the lobe of his ear to wake himself up completely. He had good reason to dislike the wines with which Saint-Vallier entertained him. They did not give him a pleasant exhilaration, only nightmares and an over-excited imagination.

The first rays of sunshine stole along the valley and lit up the Orleans highway as far as the distant line of the horizon, revealing winding columns of moving troops. They were cavalry with lances. The familiar caps of the Cossacks! "What! Here? So close to Paris? So that's why Bonafous, the stage-coach proprietor, said this was the last diligence! That's why my fellow-travellers were so gloomy and silent on the journey. Shall I get out here? But where can I go to?"

The driver turned off the road, asked Beyle for his ticket and stopped the horses. After half an hour's absence he returned in a small peasant's cart, and told Beyle that he had already settled up with the peasant, that it would be difficult for the diligence to go by a narrow road, and that it would be dangerous to catch up with the Cossacks. There was no sense in trailing after them. Beyle transferred himself to the cart and having safely outdistanced the Cossacks, arrived in Paris on the morning of 1st April.

He felt a strange sense of stupor and curiosity. There were a hundred thousand white armlets on strange uniforms and here and there the white cockades of the Bourbons. "Paris has been painted white!" he said to himself. The cause was lost. Without anger or resentment Beyle read the poster announcing the capitulation of the French capital.

The imperial coach, with the horses harnessed one behind the other, dashed from Paris to Fontainebleau for the last time. Just as it was driving in, the

escorting dragoon collided with a lamp-post and split his skull open. The blood splashed into the window of the carriage. Napoleon, without interrupting his thoughts, wiped his blood-splashed hand with a glove and tossed the glove out of the window. An hour later, wandering about the hall and not removing his hat, he glanced at the small writing-table on which lay the document of his abdication.

Beyle received notice to present himself at the Tuileries Palace on 11th April. There, with other auditors of the Council of State, he signed the declaration of the fall of Napoleon's regime. The Council of State was dismissed.

Two days later Count Arakcheyev wrote in his diary, dating it according to the Old Style: "On 31st March, 1814, in Paris, the Emperor Alexander I deigned to promote Count Arakcheyev Field Marshal together with Count Barclay. Whereof the decree was written by the Emperor's own hand, but Count Arakcheyev did not accept it and begged the Sovereign to revoke it."

After the dismissal of the Council of State the Minister Beugnot sent an official to Beyle with the proposal that he should take up a post in the Paris commissariat. During the negotiations the young man informed Beyle with a smile that it was only necessary to be accommodating and not to hinder the comrades, and then Monsieur Beyle would see that there was no post more conducive to enrichment. Impetuously Beyle stood up.

"It is enough for me that the Bourbons have been brought to Paris in the baggage-train of the Russian commissariat. There is nothing for me to do in Paris."

The affable smile disappeared from the official's face. He turned pale and took leave of Beyle in horror. Beyle went over to a mirror and looked at himself.

Getting ready to go to the theatre, he quickly changed his clothes and thought: "I must put on a self-satisfied look. That is the best weapon. They will take me for a vulgar and affected person. I cannot allow anyone to guess or be able to read my thoughts. With clenched teeth I shall go calmly forward to old age and poverty. Nothing can belittle or humiliate me. Now I know what I am worth. To hold the place which my head has occupied in life (a very ugly head) it is essential that I should not be talked about. The words of Epicurus seem to be appropriate: 'Live unobserved.' One must flee even from slightest praise, and for this one must adopt a self-satisfied air."

In this he succeeded.

Alexander I held a review of the troops in the Vertu district. For the slightest irregularity Russian officers were sent to confinement in the English guard-room as a token of the "peace and brotherhood of nations." Alexei Petrovich Yermolov heard the astonishing words of the Tsar of Russia: "For twenty years I was reputed in Europe to be a nonentity. Let's see what they will say now."

Yermolov pointed out to the Tsar the brown mass of Hussars moving along in a ceremonial march in foot formation.

"I don't recognize the regiment, Your Majesty. It has never happened to me before."

Alexander's vacant, light-blue eyes lit up with anger, his brows contracted, he turned to Yermolov and quickly mastering himself, smiled in his most engaging manner. His lorgnette went up under his plumed, three-cornered hat,

and slightly annoyed and putting on a forced smile he said: "I don't recognize that regiment either, Alexei Petrovich."

"It's the Akhtyrsky Regiment, Sire," grunted Arakcheyev, who was standing beside him.

"That's the second time you've made fun of me to-day, Alexei Andreyevich," said Alexander to Arakcheyev. "When did the Akhtyrsky men have brown capes and yellow tags? They always had blue and silver."

"But this is a special affair, Sire. They tore their blue uniforms to tatters on the way and wore out the silver, but in some nunnery or other they confiscated the Frenchwomen's cloth habits and made themselves uniforms, so as to have something to come to Paris in."

"The Akhtyrsky men are fine fellows. Let it be so," said Alexander.

Arakcheyev called the aide-de-camp and in a low voice ordered him to enter in the regimental book the Emperor's command that the uniform the Akhtyrsky Regiment had adopted was to be their regulation "uniform for all time." Prince Shirkhanov, Hussar of the sixth squadron, riding past Alexander by the right flank, gave the salute with a turn of his head and darted a vicious glance at Arakcheyev. The superior of the Gruzino cloister did not so much as deign to look at him.

## CHAPTER THIRTEEN

ON 26TH MAY, 1814, JUST BEFORE EVENING BEYLE WAS WALKING IN THE DIRECTION of the Paris opera. The street lamps had not yet been lit. The streets and side-streets, running north and east, were gradually enveloped in the twilight. Beyle was going towards the red, flaming sunset in the west; the reflected glow lit up the windows of the houses and threw the long shadows of trees on to the pavements. The cracking of whips, the cries of the shopkeepers, the hats tossed upwards, the clatter of hooves on the roadway announced the approach of a court carriage. A gilded ancient coach, drawn by eight horses, dappled white and gold, with tossing manes and egrets on their forelocks, rolled clumsily round the corner and came into the stream of evening light. Twelve horsemen in unknown uniform rode before the equipage. On the box of the ancient carriage of limousine style were motionless footmen in white liveries with embroidered lilies. Louis XVIII, the new King of France, lolled unconcernedly in the carriage, not looking at the crowd, gazing in front of him with his big dull ox-like eyes. His weary, bloated face expressed neither friendliness nor good will towards the Parisians: Louis did not like Paris. But he was not enflamed with the revengeful feelings of a monarch who came of a family that had suffered from the revolution. He was merely tired after a night of debauchery with his mistresses; the thought of having to meet his ministers filled him with disgust, for he preferred the society of Russian princesses and German princes, who had secured for him the end of the French terror. The carriage rolled on. "Legitimacy" was driving in state.

France returned to her frontiers of 1792 and signed the renunciation of all her conquests. Louis XVIII, a king of the Bourbon family, signed the State documents of post-revolutionary France with his name and dated them with the words: "The twenty-first year of our reign," emphasizing with this phrase a quarter of a century of human history. For the time being it had not yet penetrated the minds of the population that these twenty years had no existence, but the heads of noble families and émigrés, who flocked back to France in

their hundreds, considered it their duty never to say a word to their children about the fateful experiment of the past ten years. The years were simply erased from memory. And only six weeks had passed since Napoleon's abdication.

Beyle remembered how one morning Madame Bertois, holding up her skirts with both hands, came up the stairs to his mother's room, showing off her pretty bare feet, and shouted: "The Tsar of Russia wants to limit the authority of our king: the Allies are making him sign a constitution." Madame Bertois, darting fiery glances at Beyle, had just let an Austrian aide-de-camp out by the back door. In bed she had ascertained the true state of affairs quite as well as any diplomat.

The carriage with Louis had long since passed, but the reflections evoked by it did not leave Beyle. It seemed to him that nowadays Paris was more than ever the scene of human contradictions. There was that young Vicomte returning with his old mother to his St. Germain house, carrying with him a general's patent from the Duke of Braunschweig, who had at one time promised to burn and bombard revolutionary Paris. The old woman, who was very frail, was convinced that the reign of the aristocracy had returned. To-morrow she would present her title of nobility and drive out of all her castles and estates the bourgeois and peasants who had occupied them. And then the great and gracious king would permit her to bring to judgment all the Jacobins who had stolen her lawful property. And her son, the young man who had left France in his childhood at the time of the terrible conflagration, was returning to his native land, anticipating the pleasure of a son's revenge.

And here were other people: perplexed and gloomy Parisians, officers who did not know which uniform to don, the aides-de-camp and commanders of yesterday, now "men of unsettled occupation," women who were anxious to change their lovers quickly, closing the doors on the heroes and rich men of yesterday from among the "upstarts" of Napoleon's days, women who were anxious to secure their future as quickly as possible by a liaison with some titled old man. And finally, thought Beyle, there was the crazy old Marquis de Sade, who had died at Charenton only the day before. Only yesterday morning he had been sitting on the bank of the muddy brook which runs through the garden of the Charenton madhouse; a valet held before him on a tray a heap of expensive roses of all colours, and the Marquis, the author of terrible erotic novels, which had made him the bugbear of pious families, performed his morning rite: with his long withered fingers he took one flower after the other and flung them into the dirty water of the brook, admiring the roses splashed with dirt. Only yesterday this mad writer, who never put into practice his lunatic erotic fantasies, said after listening to some political talk: "Now I could put everything into practice," and having flung down the last flower, breathed his last. But he merely died of old age, and his young contemporaries had already begun to put his mad ideas into practice. Paris was filled with dens, the most luxurious gaming houses. German and Austrian gold clinked under the rakes of croupiers, women painted their faces again, prostitutes got up incredible orgies. In a month and a half there remained no trace of the tempest of war, of the thunder and lightning of the imperial decrees. And strange as it may seem, the revolutionary discipline of the old national guards had disappeared. How interesting Paris was nowadays!

"But every face carefully puts on the mask of impenetrability, tries to make it impossible for others to read it." With this thought Beyle entered the theatre.

In the parterre it was already dark. The first bars of Rossini's music surged over Beyle in a wave of foaming, sparkling and passionate sound. And again, as in his young days when he stood in the queue at the Italian box office to get a ticket for the first night of *Pinto*—"That was in Germinal of the year eight!" he recollected—he felt that state of complete happiness, almost a physical sense of bliss, which music always gave him. He plunged into these waves without reserve; he possessed the capacity peculiar to him to perceive Rossini's vocal and orchestral sounds as one harmonic whole. At times, coming to his senses, he tried to fix the momentary experience in his memory by associating it with colour; he caught himself trying to express in words his impression of the musical phrase and his sense of the whole magnificent torrent of Rossini's melodies. He had almost acquired the knack of expressing the musical impression in words, when the first act came to an end.

The curtain dropped. Huge lanterns were lighted on the balcony, a gigantic candelabra of elaborate design was let down from the ceiling. The chandeliers at the sides were lighted.

Beyle came to his senses. On his left sat a young Russian officer in a brown cape trimmed with sable and white shoulder knots. Next to him, fanning herself, was a young woman in a pink dress with a high waist and elaborately puffed sleeves that did not reach below the elbow. After glancing along the row of fauteuils, she spoke to the officer in French, telling him how the Cossacks were misbehaving in the villages and castles of Champagne. The officer replied with a smile that "the Parisiennes apparently did not complain of the Cossacks," and with these words he rose, offered her his arm and lightly jingling his spurs, walked across the parterre. Beyle was seized with a feeling of unaccountable admiration, he took out his note-book and jotted down the single word: *Hermione*. But this enchanting classical image had no reference to the woman. It was merely a conventional sign, by which a new mysterious page of the diary was written at night in complete silence at home. The single sign set in motion a whole train of lively ideas. The word referred to the pensive young Russian officer, Prince Shirkhanov.

Having written this short word, Beyle went out into the foyer and with his eyes searched for the Russian officer among the motley, well-dressed theatre crowd, who were rustling their silks and jingling their spurs. At last he caught sight of him standing in front of his lady as though astonished at something she had said. The young man was looking at her with a smile of interrogation. He was rather embarrassed; his face wore an expression that might have signified a warning both to himself and his companion against the conversation taking a serious turn, one that might remove the light cloak of gaiety from a sad subject. The woman in the pink dress hurriedly said something, raised her blue eyes and went up the stairs alone. Coming down towards her was the Countess Stroganov, and with her were Virginie Ancelot and a French ballerina, whose name was also Virginie, and who was married to Count Orlov. A minute later Beyle lost sight of these four ladies. The Russian officer who had attracted Beyle's admiration went past him with a quick, light step. He gave a passing glance in reply to Beyle's stare and went right across the hall towards a tall general with black side-whiskers, beside whom stood Mareste. The general took his aide-de-camp by the arm and whispering something in his ear led him aside. Beyle hurried over to Mareste, but just then the bell rang and the second act of the *Barber of Seville* began. The lady in the pink dress was sitting not far from Beyle. She was alone. Shirkhanov was not

with her. In the next interval Beyle looked in vain for the young man who had interested him. Having found Mareste with difficulty, he asked him about the officer. Mareste told him that the wearer of the black whiskers was a Russian general, the son of a certain favourite of Paul I. Beyle tried in vain to write his name in French characters and jotted down in his note-book: "Général Waissikoff," but Mareste himself was unable to pronounce the name of the second officer, who turned out to be the general's aide-de-camp. He merely said that the aide-de-camp was in the theatre with his fiancée, whose name was Nathalie, and likewise had "an impossible Russian surname, the pronunciation of which was enough to make your front teeth fall out."

"You can see this rosy Nathalie," said Mareste, "at her aunt's, the Countess Stroganov, at Saint-Germain, as apparently all your questions about the Russian officers mask a curiosity of another kind."

"Mareste looks for the woman everywhere," replied Beyle.

"Well, it seems it is you who have found the woman this time," replied Mareste. "Your affair may go well. The fiancé is leaving for Russia, and Nathalie is remaining with the Countess Stroganov. However, she's too young. The general told his aide-de-camp that it's too early for her to get married, as she is not yet sixteen. Anyway, I don't believe that. She has such a stern, serious expression that you can easily take her for twenty."

Later, as he was hiring a carriage after the theatre, Beyle heard one old box-keeper telling another how he had been dismissed: the Duchesse de Berry had seen on one of the doors of the theatre a portière embroidered with golden bees that had not been removed.

"And so I'm now a beggar. I shall be thrown out into the street with my family. The Prefect kicked me in the belly and said that I should escape hanging only because I was a fool. What is there special about these golden bees?"

"Don't you know," said one of his companions, "that in the Palace of the Tuileries they raised the question of conspiracy for a similar affair? The golden bees are Napoleon's emblem. They sting the Bourbon right in the eyes."

"What's that you're saying?" suddenly exclaimed a man in a black top-hat and black frock-coat. "You come along with me."

The box-keeper, who went white as a sheet and stared open-eyed in terror but saw nothing in front of him, went meekly along behind the spy who had arrested him.

"The golden bee is now in the island of Elba," thought Beyle, "but the lily, it seems, is not a honey-bearing flower, and the bees don't like it." Having called a cab, he drove back to his apartment in the rue Neuve du Luxembourg.

Before starting on the next page of the *History of Painting*, he made an entry in his diary:

I note with pleasure that I am still capable of passion. I have just returned from the French opera, where I heard the *Barber of Seville*. I sat next to a young Russian officer, the aide-de-camp of General Waissikoff (or some such name). The general is the son of a notorious favourite of Paul I. The young officer was so charming that if I had been a woman he would have inspired me with the most violent passion, a love like that of Hermione. I felt it beginning to awaken; I was already shy. I dared not look at him as much as I would have liked. If I had been a woman, I would have followed him to the end of the world. How different a Frenchman is from this officer! He was so natural and so tender.

Politeness and civilization raise everybody to the level of mediocrity,

but spoil and lower those who would excel. Nothing is more distasteful and uncouth than a stupid foreign officer without culture. But at the same time, in France, what officer can bear comparison with the one who sat next to me for naturalness combined with grandeur! If a woman had made such an impression on me, I would have spent the night trying to find out where she lived. I think that the uncertainty of my fate increases my sensibility.

He shut up his diary and, to escape from his sad thoughts, became engrossed in the reading of a biography of Haydn by Carpani.

## CHAPTER FOURTEEN

THE FIRST GUARDS DIVISION RETURNED FROM FRANCE TO RUSSIA BY SEA. THE ceremonial landing at Oranienbaum was accompanied by the usual *Te Deum*. This time the officers did not particularly welcome the idea of returning to their native land. The guardsmen looked with resentful eyes at the priests in their glittering gold vestments. Their black beards gleamed through the clouds of stupefying blue incense that rose in the hot air of the summer day. Drawn up in rows and holding their headgear with the left hand at the bent elbow, the guardsmen watched with disapproving eyes as the mounted police beat with their whips and trampled the crowd of peasants and people of the lower orders, who twice broke through the police cordon to see if their dear ones had returned from the campaign abroad.

After the *Te Deum* a search was carried out. The officers looked on unconcerned while the bony hands of the customs officials rummaged in the baggage. A French book, a translation of Radischev's *Journey from St. Petersburg to Moscow*, was discovered in a trunk and handed over to the authorities. The soldiers were quartered in barracks surrounded by a cordon of Caucasians. The orderlies were given strict orders not to permit any interviews with relations until special instructions were given. Paris seemed to the guardsmen a city of freedom and happiness in comparison with the environs of Petersburg.

Young Shirkhanov entered Petersburg together with the 9th Guards Division; beside him rode Yakushkin and Tolstoy. Both of them, not having heard the command, almost rode beyond the fixed line towards the huge gilded coach, in which the Empress Maria Fedorovna came to meet her son Alexander. The Tsar of Russia on a sorrel horse rode at a light pace towards the coach with bared sword, giving the customary salute. A fascinating smile hovered on his rosy lips. There was a feminine gentleness and deference in his eyes. He was elegance itself, uniting the bearing of a cavalry officer with an effeminate manner, which made the Italian Maroto exclaim in Shirkhanov's ear: "*Ermafrodito!*"

And suddenly, just at the moment when the sword flashed in the sun, giving an elegant military salute, a simple, red-bearded peasant in bast shoes and a white felt hat ran across the road, flapping his arms and the skirts of his black caftan. A strange and unexpected transformation took place: interrupting the military salute and forgetting all about the gilded coach of the Empress-Mother, the Autocrat of all the Russias spurred his horse and bending towards the saddle, chased after the peasant and tried to pierce him with his sword. The crowd made way and swallowed up the fugitive. Thousands of similar peasant faces gazed from the crowd at the infuriated Tsar.



"Look, look," whispered Yakushkin to Shirkhanov. "The beauty has again turned into a cat, as soon as she caught sight of a mouse. Shall we put up with the masquerade for long?"

"Come to Nikolai Turgenev's to-day," said Shirkhanov. "The journey is finished. We must continue our Paris talks about what ought to be done."

Shirkhanov paid a visit to his great-nephew Seriozha Sobolevsky at a boarding school for the sons of noblemen. The twelve-year-old boy, an illegitimate son of Soimonov, having learnt an incredible number of foreign languages and read many foreign books, had just completed a moving elegy about a turtle-dove and friendship. He read it to his uncle in a husky, quavering voice, while next to him sat a mischievous boy who looked like a monkey and improvised such amusing French parodies of every line that uncle and nephew laughed out loud: Shirkhanov unaffectedly, and Seriozha gallantly, in spite of some hurt to his vanity. The boy was Sobolevsky's comrade—Levushka Pushkin. The visiting hours were drawing to an end when suddenly a fair-haired, blue-eyed boy with thick lips and unusually lively and darting eyes came running up the stairs. After greeting the mocking boy, he held out his hand to Seriozha Sobolevsky and stood respectfully before Shirkhanov.

"Uncle," said Seriozha to Shirkhanov, "this is my friend, Levushka's brother Sashka, a pupil of the Tsarskoe Selo Lyceum."

"You have returned from France, Prince?" asked Pushkin in French, resting his lively blue eyes on Shirkhanov. "Tell me about it."

A tutor came into the reception room and announced that the pupils must disperse. Seriozha said good-bye to Shirkhanov, and Levushka Pushkin reproached his brother with giving himself airs since he had graduated from the Lyceum, with seldom coming to see him and then only at the end of the visiting hours.

"But I came to tell you that you have been invited to Pushchino on Thursday," replied the young poet. "Make arrangements to get leave."

Just by the exit Pushkin overtook Shirkhanov.

"Where are your horses, Prince?" he asked.

"I came on foot," replied Shirkhanov.

"May I offer you a seat in my uncle's carriage? Where can I take you to?"

"I'm going to Alexander Ivanovich Turgenev."

"I'd like to go with you, if you aren't afraid of gossip about me."

"That's your affair," replied Shirkhanov, "but I can assure you that I don't listen to gossip."

"But you're sure to hear, as your cousin Malinovsky will tell you everything. Only don't be angry. It is really a trifling matter."

"Oh, I already know about your prank. Stepan Stepanovich Frolov is to blame for everything. Since Arakcheyev appointed that rascal Frolov to your Lyceum, Malinovsky has had a good deal of trouble. Anyway, has your usher Foma found another job since he was dismissed on account of your pranks?" asked Shirkhanov.

"No, three of us have been paying for Foma's keep ever since. Nobody dreamed that he would be deprived of his post on account of a bottle of rum."

"Quite so, and did the three of you have to remain on your knees morning and evening for two weeks?"

"Yes, and our names were entered in the black book, and Count Razumovsky, the Minister, shouted at us. And all over an egg-flip. But the most ferocious of all is your aunt. She considers I've led Malinovsky astray."

"You write verse, I'm told?" asked Shirkhanov.

"Yes," replied Pushkin, and called out to the coachman: "Stop!"

Shirkhanov and Pushkin entered Turgenev's house.

Alexander Ivanovich Turgenev gave them a courteous welcome.

"Ah, Sverchok, Sverchok!<sup>1</sup> Have you been up to your pranks again?" he said to Pushkin.

"Nobody has played so many pranks as you, Alexander Ivanovich. Kuchelbecker is a Lutheran, and yet he complains that you drove away all his Catholic acquaintances. Why such hostility to other creeds?"

"Well, anyway, it was not I who drove the Catholics away. But if you want to stand up for the Jesuits here, you should know that on 20th December the Emperor signed a decree expelling them not only from the capital but from the Empire as well."

"I'm not sorry for them: although I aspire to the path of righteousness, I choose for myself teachers of the religion of Bacchus."

"So I've heard," replied A. I. Turgenev, and turning to Shirkhanov he said: "My brother Nicholas feels sad on returning to Russia. There is no hope of serfdom being abolished. He wants you to give him the French documents regarding the Orpheus Lodge and then he would like to take a look at the papers of Pozdeyev concerning the peasant unrest; Pozdeyev writes to Lanskoï that 'the Illuminati spirit of anarchy and independence, which has spread throughout Europe, is likewise directing the secret peasant organizations.' Look through all this, Prince, not later than to-morrow so that by next week's meeting we may have from you a geographical map of political ideas. Fear has big eyes."

"What you say is true, Alexander Ivanovich," replied Shirkhanov. "Trubetzkoï explains the matter quite simply: Pozdeyev and Lanskoï are men of the past. They were frightened when they were still boys in the first junior ranks, orderlies to Count Panin, when the latter was examining the Pugachev rebels. Hence it was only a short step from their fear to the idea of the peasants being mixed up with the Illuminati. But it is not Pozdeyev who thinks like that. Trubetzkoï has shown me Kutuzov's letters, in which the latter calls France a poisonous nest of regicides, robbers and bandits. And Lopukhin is no better, when he writes that 'the spirit of madness has taken possession of France on the verge of ruin.'"

Pushkin stood listening eagerly. His lips were compressed, his eyes gazed alternately at the speakers.

Noticing this, Turgenev said to him: "Sverchok, look over there: Katenin is waiting for you with some new French plays."

Indeed, Katenin was standing beside a mosaic table, on which were laid out some French books in sand-coloured bindings. Pushkin went to the other end of the room.

Shirkhanov looked through the bundle of papers which Turgenev had handed to him. In it were secretly delivered letters of Kutuzov to Pleshcheyev. Shirkhanov read: "The monarchs delighted in the works of Voltaire, Helvétius and such like, and caressed and rewarded them, not realizing that, in the words of the Russian proverb, they were fostering a serpent in their bosom. Now they see the result of the brilliant words, but are now almost without the means to put an end to what they have let loose. Unhappy France! That fair country is being sacrificed to a false philosophy and a few heads that have been turned.

<sup>1</sup> Sverchok : Cricket.

God grant that this lamentable example may open the eyes of the monarchs and show them plainly that the Christian religion is the only basis of the well-being of the people and of their own lawful regime. May they learn from their neighbour's misfortune that the encouragement of wit is a veritable poison consuming the vital forces of all order and subordination."

"Vain fears," thought Shirkhanov. "France has turned sharply backwards, not without the aid of the royal slave-owner of Russia. An iron tomb looms over the peoples. How is it our chevaliers and brothers and masters of lodges do not realize this? Why is it that none of them has the slightest qualm about the right to own slaves?"

Suddenly there resounded in his ears with a clarity bordering on hallucination the words: "We are treading the path of the times so lightly that every step we take disappears irrevocably behind us."

"Who said that? Who?" Shirkhanov asked himself. And he remembered that these were the words of his best friend, "the teacher, to whom his heart and mind were given for ever." These words had been spoken to him quite recently in Paris by Piotr Yakovlevich Chaadayev, the best officer of the Akhtyrsky Regiment of Hussars, the hero of Borodino, Tarutino, Maloyaroslavetz and many European battlefields.

His almost daily association with Chaadayev, that "sage in uniform," had fundamentally transformed the young man's inner world. Besides manliness of character one could observe in him that change in appearance which testifies to intensive soul-searching, to much work, to readiness for sacrifice.

Three events had contributed to this change. The first was the perusal of the audacious letters of the Frenchman Beyle, then an enemy, who had awakened doubts in him as to the value of Russian institutions; the second was his meeting with the stranger in the guard-room, and the third was his friendship with Chaadayev, which was a perpetual stimulus to his mind.

A broad-shouldered man with a sceptical smile on his lips and cold grey eyes that gazed through spectacles in tortoise-shell frames laid his hand on Shirkhanov's shoulder.

This was Prince Piotr Andreyevich Viazemsky.

"Well, are you getting used to Petersburg?" he asked Shirkhanov.

"With some difficulty and not very willingly, but I think I have already got used to it again," replied Shirkhanov.

"And how is Nathalie?"

"Nathalie has remained in Paris."

"For long?" asked Viazemsky.

"I don't think she would be able to answer that herself," said Shirkhanov bitterly.

"So it's true, as I've heard, that you've fallen out with her?"

"Through no fault of mine," replied Shirkhanov.

"A bad and ungenerous answer," remarked Viazemsky. "You'd better give way, if there has been a quarrel."

"Look here, Piotr Andreyevich," retorted Shirkhanov, "you pass judgment very freely on my affairs on the strength of nothing but rumour. What have I got to give way about? The fact is, I am no longer a landowner."

"So I've heard, friend, but that isn't the question. You could easily have released some sixty souls from serfdom—but why should the old woman deprive herself of her fortune for the sake of your whim? She has a thousand five hundred souls. She's not going to throw them away for the sake of your Jacobinism."

"I'm not a Jacobin, but I have rational ideas about slavery and politics."

"Ah, you politician! Politics are only for knaves, your business is the service. And I don't know what to do with that lad, Alexander Viazemsky, since he has been in your company. Those philosophers of yours are a cursed nuisance. Ah, here's Pushkin!" exclaimed Viazemsky, all of a sudden and, interrupting the conversation, called out to the young poet.

Left alone, Shirkhanov reflected on the reasons for Natasha's coolness. His affairs had been given a strange interpretation in Petersburg society. It did not correspond at all to the reality. His inner struggle with Natasha's endeavours to apply religion to questions requiring a political solution had been oversimplified by her relations. Viazemsky had merely repeated the general opinion that Shirkhanov—a nobleman with a small estate—was dabbling in the politics of the "canaille because of his poverty." In any case, a gulf lay between the young man and his fiancée. In the short interval since they had seen each other in France, both had felt an estrangement, despite Natasha's original inclination to follow her fiancé everywhere. It was she who begged her aunt to go to Paris in the wake of the Allied armies, it was she who was anxious to go abroad in order to be nearer to him. While during the two and a half years he had experienced and felt and thought more than any other man would have done in a quarter of a century, while he was developing and gaining strength in talks with Nikolai Turgenev and Piotr Chaadayev and observing the life of Germany and France, Natasha, thanks to the old aunt, came more and more under the influence of the dangerous and unctuous Jesuit, Joseph de Maistre, who, on leaving Petersburg in 1808, took with him a good number of spiritual daughters, chiefly rich old women without direct heirs. He remembered what de Maistre had said about Arakcheyev: "Alexander felt the need to provide himself with a counsellor; he wanted to have beside him as terrifying a bogey as possible on account of the internal ferment that prevails here." The Frenchman had noticed the ferment and hastened to take himself off to France.

"Yes, I am a thousand times right," thought Shirkhanov. "But for the war with Napoleon, we'd have had a new Pugachev, more terrible than the first. So against a Pugachev of the people, the Tsar has set up Arakcheyev—the Pugachev of the nobility. What are we to do between the two Pugachevs? There is only one thing—to overthrow the Tsar's autocracy. Alexander Ivanovich is on the threshold of the fellowship. Nikolai Ivanovich is even closer and knows the names of the Lodge Masters. But so far Nikolai Ivanovich knows nothing about the society of army friends, in which Piotr Yakovlevich and I are working."

Shirkhanov's reflections were interrupted by Nikolai Turgenev, who came up to him with a young, dark-haired officer.

"This is our comrade," said Nikolai Ivanovich, indicating Shirkhanov to his companion.

The ceremony of introduction took place—a shaking of hands according to an established ritual, followed by the revelation of the names. The dark-haired officer turned out to be Count Heraclius Polignac, a Captain in the Life Guards of the Litovsky Regiment.

"Let's go into my brother's study," said Nikolai Ivanovich, "and we'll have a talk there about our business. It is clear, Count, that since the revolution took place in France, it has split the family of the French nobility into hostile camps. You are friendly to our liberal aspirations, but there are Frenchmen

who have come to our country to defend the ancient autocracy. Such a man is your Baron Dallas, an officer in the Russian service, who does not hesitate to inflict corporal punishment in his battalion."

"I know him," replied Heraclius Polignac, "but he is weary of the Russian service and only yesterday talked of the necessity of returning to France as soon as the nobles' privileges were restored."

"The nobles' privileges are an important thing, but in the hands of despots they are a mere plaything. Your statement, Count, is very important. Prince Shirkhanov will pass it on to Chaadayev."

"What have you to say about Chaadayev, Prince?" said Turgenev to Shirkhanov.

Pushkin, passing the speakers arm-in-arm with Viazemsky, took up the question and called out:

"He was by heaven's will supreme,  
Born in the fetters of service to the Tsars;  
Brutus he would have been in Rome, in Athens—Pericles,  
With us he is an officer in the Hussars."

"Very smart and witty, but what harm is there in his being an officer?" retorted Shirkhanov.

"The young man is envious; he did not take part in the great events," said Polignac.

"I still have time," replied Pushkin. "I shall go into the Hussars without fail."

"Come now, repeat that," begged Viazemsky. "I'll write it down. However, you must write it yourself, so that it won't be forgotten, on Chaadayev's portrait when you come to Ostafyevo."

"When shall I come to your Ostafyevo?" said Pushkin. "And what sort of interpreter of portraits am I! You keep making me write things down and then you give me away."

Shirkhanov, Polignac and Nikolai Turgenev went into Alexander Turgenev's study and locked the door behind them. They conferred on the state of French politics, on the people's changed moods and opinions, Arakcheyev's power and the new projects of Alexander I, who aimed at placing himself at the head of an alliance of the monarchs of Europe to check the spirit of rebellion which had invaded all countries. Alexander Turgenev said that Pluchard, the Petersburg bookseller and printer, had printed a huge quantity of anti-republican pamphlets and was distributing them everywhere with the help of Arakcheyev. The conference ended with a report by Shirkhanov on the reception into the Masonic Lodge of "The Three Virtues" (i.e., liberty, equality, fraternity) of Count Saint-Simon, the author of *Letters of a Geneva Citizen*, to whom he, Shirkhanov, had been sent in Paris by Chaadayev. Count Saint-Simon, who had renounced all his titles and noble rank, represented, in Shirkhanov's opinion, "a new breed of human being." Living in complete poverty with his former valet as with his best friend, surrounded by fellow thinkers and pursued at every step by enemies, Saint-Simon was able to open the eyes of men to the great secret of history; he, Shirkhanov, when sitting with this wise man, had realized for the first time that the political systems of States were in reality organizations for stealing the labour of the poor and that the truly just State was a State of free workers.

"I consider this to be a resurrection of Sir Thomas More's *Utopia*," said Nikolai Turgenev as he took leave of everybody.

## PART TWO

### CHAPTER FIFTEEN

THE NOVELIST, WHO HAS TO OBSERVE FROM AFAR THE CAREERS OF HIS RESTLESS heroes and to report on both the tedious as well as the entertaining moments in their lives, finds himself considerably embarrassed when he realizes the reader's impatience. Reproaches of conscience tell us that we ought to meet the reader's wishes and acquaint Beyle with Shirkhanov. But, keeping to historical truth, and being bound to describe the times in detail, we are quite unable to bring this meeting about. The acquaintance did not take place. The Russian officer, who had been obliged by the circumstances of his duties, in spite of his own modesty, to intervene in the personal affairs of Henri Beyle by reading his most intimate letters, neither started when he met Beyle, nor felt in his heart the slightest desire to distinguish in the theatre crowd Beyle's round head with its dark chestnut, almost black, curly hair, thick nose and slightly bloated features, which had lost the sharpness and severity that had characterized them during the Russian campaign. On the other hand, Henri Beyle felt very strongly attracted to the Russian officer and intensely curious about him, though without dreaming that his secret thoughts had ever become known to this handsome young man in epaulets. Shirkhanov had long forgotten the name of Beyle, but he well remembered the audacity of his letters, his honest and wholesome hatred of slavery. Beyle described the appearance of the officer without mentioning his name. Fate had brought them together for a short while only to separate them again.

At the time which we are now describing, Chaadayev, the Turgenev brothers, and young Shirkhanov talked with Count Polignac about the end of the French revolution and the means of liberating the Russian peasants. Chaadayev pointed out that the abolition of serfdom and the feudal privileges of the nobility had been absolutely unthinkable for the Kings of France and was therefore brought about by revolution; but in Russia "there was every possibility of obtaining the abolition of slavery without trouble."

At the same time the French Baron Dallas tried his utmost to realize his counter-revolutionary schemes through the agency of Russia. Polignac, who was in the Russian service, helped the revolutionary movement, while Dallas, his French compatriot and colleague in Russia, was to become a few years later a Minister of that bitter reactionary, the French King Charles X, together with Heraclius's namesake, the Jesuit Polignac.

At the same time, Henri Beyle, having fled from France, walked about the streets of Milan with his head held high. He openly expressed his contempt for the Austrian police and gendarmerie and, worst of all, took it into his head to attack the Bourbons in print.

Before setting out for Milan, he sorted out his papers. He contemptuously threw aside a comedy in verse, which he had begun in the first year of his acquaintance with Mélanie. How could he even have thought of writing verse! And did literature exist for him at all? If he ever wrote at all, it would be about the science of the human heart, the science of music, the science of painting.

His play in verse had merely been conceived because of his attraction for Mélanie Guilbert. He had seen that distressed little actress in tears when his cousin, Martial Daru, had struck her with a whip behind the scenes. He had had a row with Martial, and afterwards started a correspondence with Mélanie, whom he arranged to call Louason. Then he made his first experiment in verse. But all that was a thing of the past. Now he was in haste to publish his first book under the pseudonym of Louis-Alexandre-César Bombet: *Lettres écrites de Vienne en Autriche sur le célèbre compositeur Joseph Haydn et suivies d'une Vie de Mozart et de considérations sur Metastase et l'état présent de la Musique en France et en Italie.*

He felt the need to find a way of escape from the cul-de-sac into which fate had led him, when bright and interesting activity no longer seemed possible for France. "The life of the country is finished. The age which brought forth a race of giants is over and past. The French bourgeois, the shopkeeper, the chevalier of profit, have appeared everywhere and occupied the first places." But with the Bourbons the hopes of the nobles had also returned. The nobleman, frightened and looking anxiously around, was seeking the way back to his old château, stepping cautiously over the bridge destroyed by the Revolution. Apparently the Tsar of Russia had said of the Bourbons: "They have learnt nothing and forgotten nothing." France was done for as a country. "I derive from cosmopolis," wrote Beyle. "I am a citizen of the world, and all the world belongs to me. So let us occupy ourselves with books. That is something which the Bourbons will not take from me. But how can one forget that in the interval of years between the nobility, who have outlived their time and the new-born age a generation of giants has disappeared without a trace?"

Unfortunately, the copyist of the book *Sur le célèbre Haydn* forgot to delete all the parts taken from the books of Carpani, Schlichtengroll, Winkler and Baretta—four authors, whom Henri Beyle treated as a true Buonapartist Commissaire des guerres making requisitions. Three of the looted authors were dead. But alas! Carpani was still alive! Carpani loved Haydn with the boundless love of the mediocre for the genius. Beyle likewise loved Haydn with the passion of an intense music lover. Of this he gave distinct proof. In May 1809, when the French cannon were shelling the suburbs of Vienna, Joseph Haydn was unwell, from time to time going with difficulty to the window to look at the flower-bed outside. The parterres and avenues of the garden, which the old composer had carefully planted with his own hands, were his pride.

The French cannon were thundering. The sick old musician, silently shaking his head, would go away from the window and lie down on the bed, opening his shirt, which hindered his breathing, and gasping for breath. Nothing agitated Beyle so much as the thought of saving this old man. But when after penetrating, with difficulty into besieged Vienna, he wanted to enter Haydn's little house, he was told that the old man had been taken to the Stefanskirche. He had died of a broken heart the day a French bomb destroyed his garden. Beyle was present at Haydn's funeral. But alas, he did not know all the details of the composer's life! And that dullard Carpani had given them year after year. What he had to do was to throw out Carpani's ruminations and judgments on music and take the whole of the biography *en bloc*.

Monsieur Bombet's book passed unnoticed. But Carpani, being interested in everything new about Haydn, bought the book, took it home, cut the pages, read it and jumped up in horror. There was not a word about him anywhere,

but his words were everywhere. How monstrous. Bombet writes as a pupil of Haydn: "When I was present at the last moments of the life of Joseph Haydn, I was seized by a terrible fever, I was unable to control myself." But it was he, Carpani, who had been present! It was he who had had the fever! No Bombet had ever been a pupil of Haydn! How dare this Frenchman steal other people's works so shamelessly! And so, not long afterwards, Monsieur Bombet's book on the musician Haydn attracted general attention. The newspapers published Carpani's letter about the way he had been robbed. Beyle sat in a Venetian café and laughed as he read the letter. But together with this letter he read a report printed in huge letters: "The lion has broken out of his cage. Buonaparte had landed in Golfe Juan." And further on: "The troops have taken the oath. A new levy has been decreed. Paris salutes the Emperor Napoleon. Louis XVIII has fled from France."

It is early morning. The Piazza di San Marco is deserted. Thousands of pigeons fly down again on to the huge grey flagstones, which are lit up by the sun as soon as the silver film of rain ceases to dim the light bluish air of Venice. Beyle unfolds a newspaper, smooths it out on a marble table in the Café Florian and orders a second cup of coffee, two eggs, a brioche and ice-cream.

"I've had enough of Buonaparte! It was not without reason that the German Hegel said that history repeats itself. The worst of it is that the first time it is a tragedy and the second time a farce. We had better occupy ourselves with that good fellow Carpani. Indeed, it will provide me with amusement for a couple of weeks." How fortunate that Beyle has been in Venice these two days! To-morrow he will set out again for Milan. Without giving a thought to France and Buonaparte, he goes along the Procuratie Vecchie, turns off to the Marciano library and buys a small packet of paper, then, thinking over his reply to Carpani, goes up the steps of the library. The librarian, with whom he has often sat at Florian's or Guardi's, meets him with an exclamation and congratulations, plies him with questions about France, about Napoleon, and shakes him by the hand enthusiastically as "the companion of the great commander." Beyle waves a deprecating hand and asks to be allowed to come in for an hour and to peruse again the *Breviarium Grimani*.

Signor Carlo willingly accedes to his request. Beyle looks at the parchment Book of Hours for the tenth time, turns over the delicate white vellum leaves and admiring the picture of a blue night in Flanders in the December chapter of the Book of Hours, pretends to be entirely engrossed in the study of the breviary of the Doge Grimani. In reality he is stringing words together with great rapidity, attacking Carpani with pretended indignation, calling him a plagiarist, a writer without talent, a literary hack, and proving as clearly as two and two make four that Carpani is an impostor and a blockhead. Then calling a rompino—a beggar who collects soldi and centesimi for holding the sides of gondolas with a boathook when passengers are getting in or out—Beyle gives the little rompino a lira and orders him to take the letter to the post.

The letter to the editor "about that rascal Carpani" will appear in a week's time, not before, and now he must go where there will be no talk about France and Buonaparte. Perhaps it is better not to return to Milan.

A minute later the gondolier, lazily dipping his oar, steers towards the Lido.

"The Lido is a long, long little island," says Beyle to himself. "Lido means little tongue: on this little tongue I shall take a rest from the chatter of the long Italian tongues." Now the Schiavoni quay has turned into a white streak.



The Palace of the Doges stands over the sea like a rosy bather in the foam of the tide. San Giorgio Maggiore stands out distinctly against the background of the dazzling sky. In a quarter of an hour's time Beyle will step on to the sloping sandy shore of the happy island and will stay there till late in the night.

Between a fisherman's cottage and a street smithy, in a little shanty, lives his friend Angelica, a healthy, laughing, utterly carefree girl. There will be a light meal of fresh fish, cheese, macaroni, and light, sparkling Asti. And then, towards evening, he will take a walk along the shore as far as the grey walls of the *fortezza*, where he can spread his cloak and sit on the sand for a while, bathe with Angelica, who swims like a fish, and watch the Venetian fishermen returning in the evening, reminding him of Cato's: "I saw the sea blossom with sails."

Together with sea-gulls bathing in the blue air appear the slanting Latin sails, moving from the horizon towards the shore—red, orange, gold, silver, violet—the whole sea becomes alive when the fishermen return to the Lido in the evening.

At night Angelica, coming out of the shanty with Beyle and embracing him on the threshold, takes a big key from the wall and walks with him to the jetty. A warm breeze, as carefree as herself, ruffles her hair. She laughs with broken, happy laughter and sings a *canzonetta* in which Santa Agata rhymes with the word "*peccata*"—sinner. She draws up a boat, opens the lock, flings it into the stern, and sits down at the oars. She rows well, but from time to time she pretends the oars are slipping from her, splashes salt water into her passenger's face and falls over into the bottom of the boat. Beyle tries to help her. The boat ships water over the side. The girl tears herself away and springing to her feet with the agility of a cat, sits down at the oars and refuses to allow Beyle to come near her. An hour later the boat puts in at the steps. At the *Redentore* on the Grand Canal, at the spot where eighteen boats with coloured lanterns cluster round a singer in a huge black shawl, with a tambourine and castanets. It is Saturday, and on the Grand Canal, at the mouth of the lagoon, they sing serenades the whole night long.

Only towards morning does Beyle return to the forsaken friend with whom he is living in Venice and accidentally wakes him by dropping a shoe on the floor. Half-awake, Buratti asks him where he has come from, and Beyle, laughing, tells him about the Carpani affair. Buratti wakes up completely, gets a bottle of red wine and a few dry biscuits, and they begin a meal, undecided whether to call it late supper or early breakfast. Buratti tries to persuade Beyle not to go to France. Beyle patiently waits for the end of the tirade against monarchs, gazing at his friend with pretended indifference. As Beyle remains silent, Buratti flares up still more with the scared indignation of a revolutionary and poet, till at last Beyle calmly declares:

"Why should I, a Milanese citizen, march under the buffoon's banners of the Emperor? I realized only too well after the Russian campaign what Napoleon represents, and I know too much about what France is like nowadays. All her energy has disappeared. The French are not human beings, they are dolls. I am a Milanese. I assure you that the present comedy will end in another Elba. In becoming Emperor, Napoleon—a remarkable administrator, a magnificent military commander—lost all his advantages. At one time all the interests of those who were forging the new France were united in his name. But Napoleon stood aside from this unity of interests, and France felt him to be an enemy. If at present he has any shadow of success it is a very fleeting shadow.

Buonaparte's landing at Cannes and his appearance in Paris do not in the least mean that he is necessary to France, but only that that blockhead and bull, that thick-headed brute—Louis Bourbon—has already managed to offend a good many people. Present-day France has retained the Code Napoleon in spite of the Bourbons. That is more important to her than his own person. Buonaparte won't last. He has revived the tinsel lustre of the monarchy, he has poisoned his officers with the venom of envy and spoilt them with the chase after titles, forgetting that the vindictive aristocracy regards him as an insolent upstart. The bourgeoisie willingly give their daughters to titled suitors, but nobody thinks much of a new nobility newly baked by the son of a Corsican clerk. If there is a fresh struggle of the classes, Buonaparte will stand aside. The generation with strength of character and will has disappeared without trace.

"There is nobody to renew the heroic history of France. Commonplace days have arrived."

## CHAPTER SIXTEEN

"THIS CARPANI IS THE DONKEY ON WHOSE BACK, IT APPEARS, I AM MAKING MY entry into literature," thinks Beyle, opening a fresh newspaper and reading the desperate outcry of the man who had been robbed. "But the donkey jibs; therefore one must secure a new advertisement for Monsieur Bombet."

And in place of the old admirer of Haydn, the author Monsieur Bombet, appears "Bombet the younger," who comes forward as a noble witness who accuses Carpani of dishonest juggling, downright falsehood, a whole series of gross errors and absurdities both in the biography of Haydn and in his, Monsieur Carpani's, letter. In standing up for his elder relation, Bombet the younger defends with dignity the rights of genius and talent from the attacks of the ungifted and by way of comparison adduces the miserable efforts of the dull brain of Carpani and the brilliant quality and fountain of remarkable ideas that flow from the pen of the infinitely talented Monsieur Bombet the elder. Can these two efforts be compared? Can there be any question on whose side is truth? Monsieur Bombet could not extol his own work, so he, Monsieur Bombet the younger, had to do it for him.

In publishing this letter the editors of the newspaper consider it their duty to declare that "the claims of Monsieur Carpani are completely unfounded." From the Italian newspapers the controversy reaches Vienna. Admirers of the deceased Haydn ask Carpani on what grounds he had the audacity to attack the best book that has been written about the dead musician? Carpani, terrified, rushes round the editorial offices, beginning to doubt his own existence; he feels on the verge of insanity, he posts a pile of letters that are delivered by the northern and southern mail-coaches to the newspapers of the various capitals. The newspapers politely refuse to print them. Bombet is triumphant. But he keeps his triumph to himself, sharing it with nobody, as for all his entourage he is simply Monsieur Beyle, a retired army official, living in Milan on a meagre pension sent to him by the Grenoble commissariat.

His usual method of spending his time was as follows: After waking up in the morning, he would leave the Casa Acerbi to take coffee in the Piazza della Cattedrale, then to pass an hour or two in the Brera Gallery before the best canvases of the Italian painters, then have lunch somewhere with friends

in a small Milanese trattoria, then walk along the paths of the Parco Nuovo, near the rotunda built by the French under the name of Amfiteatro dell'Arena, and make notes with a pencil on the margins of the *History of Painting in Italy* written by Professor Lanzi. Towards evening, when the air began to thicken and the dust was gilded under the rays of the setting sun, he liked to mount to the roof of Milan Cathedral and there, amid a forest of marble spires, turrets, marble carvings as fine as lace, scaffoldings and passages, he would gaze at the endless green plains of Lombardy, admire the sea of vineyards and the silver-grey olive groves. After the radiant outside world, how dark and lifeless the interior of the cathedral seemed to be ! An unfinished marble giant, occupying the area of a city, capable of accommodating a whole army, but dark, deserted and oppressive with its inner gloom. . . .

Then came his third impression of the day: the noisy street, the cracking of whips, the lively crowd with which he mingled on his way to the theatre of La Scala. Every evening friends would meet in a box at the theatre in accordance with the Italian custom. They would be joined by occasional visitors, fellow-travellers on the road of life, who came to the theatre to spend a few pleasant hours with the music of Cimarosa and Mozart. Beyle was going to the box of Monsignore Ludovico de Breme. This former chaplain of the Italian Viceroy Eugene of Savoy was distinguished for his elegant manners, hospitality and love of foreigners. Beyle was very fond of him and of the circle of friends who gathered round him. He had none of the peculiarities which Beyle detested. He was without the vanity, affectation and hypocrisy which so spoilt the French. What could be more odious than the French pamphlets which were now being published not only in Paris but chiefly by Pluchard in Petersburg ! All those Latin and French hymns to the Bourbons, all those satirical attacks such as the requiem service held over the coffin of Napoleon, who was still alive—all so characteristic of the French and which made them so odious. In Italy poverty was not regarded as a crime. Poor Maroncelli, Monti, Foscolo, the poet Silvio Pellico and finally Henri Beyle himself were by no means rich men, and nevertheless these guests were received in the box of Monsignore Ludovico as well as a dozen or so other visitors who had both titles and riches, such as Count Porro and Count Federigo Confalonieri.

The beautiful theatre of La Scala, which had the best baignoires in the whole of Italy, was remarkable for one thing: the boxes opening out into the auditorium were connected with three or four rooms, in which society gathered as in drawing-rooms. There, wines, a light supper, fruit and orangeade were served, people read the newspapers and chatted, and after pressing the small, handle of a carved door, passed into the auditorium to listen to the best music in the world.<sup>1</sup> Monsignore Ludovico's friends came together in his box, as in a safe place, after Napoleon's Cisalpine Republic had collapsed and its capital Milan, had become once again a city oppressed by the Austrian authorities. The hypocrisy of the Catholic monarchy was a glove on the iron paw of Metternich.

But the Austrian gendarmes did not have access to the box of Monsignore de Breme. For this reason, in plotting the liberation of Italy from the Austrian yoke and the return of the Republics, the Italian conspirators could exchange views more or less freely there. Alighting at the last halting-place before Milan

<sup>1</sup> The theatres were built by wealthy Milanese patrons. The boxes were named after the particular families to whom they belonged. Survivals of this hereditary form of subscription may be observed in Milan to-day.

and crossing the city boundary on foot, people who could not enter Milan openly would turn up in Monsignore Ludovico's box. At night they returned in the same way or spent the night at Casa Acerbi, at Beyle's. This Signor Arrigo Beyle was remarkable for his devilish audacity. As an old officer of Buonaparte, he calmly duped the Austrian police and received all whom Confalonieri sent to him. From the forest fastnesses of the Sabine mountains, from the mountains of Apulia and Calabria, where Italian charcoal-burners lived in hovels, burning charcoal in the day-time and receiving at night fugitives, exiles and rebels, came to the north those chevaliers of Italian freedom of that time known as the Carbonari (charcoal-burners). Arrigo Beyle, as the Italians called him, would pass the time in a carefree way in the Milanese theatre listening to the music or conversing with friends, and at night, as though leading another life, he would receive the conspirators at his lodging.

What was it these men wanted? They were divided up into various groups. Each group pursued its own aims, and each group called its aims "the welfare of Italy." While the Austrian yoke weighed heavily on all, the sons of dismembered Italy were united in the yearning for "Italian freedom" and the complete independence of their country; the French revolution had seemed to them the beginning of salvation. The departure of the last Austrian regiment from Milan was the sign for general rejoicing. People grown used to oppressive boredom and servility suddenly felt the need to laugh and make riotously merry. All that had been the vogue a year before now aroused a feeling of disgust. It became the fashion to take risks, to live dangerously, to gamble with life. People awakening from a long sleep felt that exuberance of energy which is conducive to gambling for high stakes. General Buonaparte brought with him the republican banners, and the priests and gendarmes of the Austrian monarch fled before him—therefore one had to follow Buonaparte. But clouds began to gather on the political horizon. In 1804 General Buonaparte became Emperor of the French. The Republic came to an end, and the numerous unemployed relations of Buonaparte were placed on thrones that were hastily vacated for them. Murat by the will of his brother-in-law became King of Naples. Italy provided an immense number of soldiers. Forty thousand Italians perished in the Russian campaign alone. Napoleon pumped enormous sums of money out of the Italian towns and villages. The honour of being protected by the French became a very heavy yoke. After the Russian campaign new levies began in spite of the fact that the population of the Apennine peninsula had sacrificed sixty thousand young, strong, and healthy Italians to Napoleon's ambition. Doubts became certainties. Napoleon's authority began to crumble and at length it collapsed. And against the background of Napoleon's failure in Russia the Kings of his Italian possessions, Eugene Beauharnais and Joachim Murat, began to work for their own advancement. Thus was the nucleus of the Italian tragedy formed. The French newspapers did not hesitate to print accusations against Murat for his sudden departure from Russia. The Italians and Naples in particular bewailed the loss of their young men, and only the Austrian generals rubbed their hands, knowing that the time would come when Napoleon's puppet would fall like ripe fruit into the Austrian basket. Militant parties sprang up in Milan. They said that "Murat was tired of being Napoleon's agent." But being a political nonentity, he maintained himself only by the power of his master. Without Napoleon he lost all significance. The Liberals and the bourgeoisie of the towns tried to persuade him to make war on France, taking advantage of Murat's personal resentment

against Napoleon after Berezina and Vilna. They implicated him in the activities of a peculiar brand of Italian Masons—Masons who were working against the political aspirations of the masses. Meanwhile Murat was summoned to Napoleon in Germany. A reconciliation seemed to have taken place there: Murat commanded the Imperial cavalry. In Germany Murat was again given instructions, which were flattering to the King of Naples, but which, in the opinion of Napoleon, secured Murat's downfall in Italy. Napoleon was well aware of the attitude of the peasants and shepherds of the south of Italy. Pretending to be reconciled with Murat, he gave him General Manhès to aid him. And having returned to Italy with this evil genius, Murat began to carry out the orders he had received from Napoleon. Manhès set out for the south, to those places where the father of the future great writer, General Hugo, migrating from village to village with his four-year-old son on his saddle, now pursued and now fleeing from, the notorious Italian bandit, Fra Diavolo. In those days Fra Diavolo had already been captured and the bands of highwaymen broken up. Needless to say, it was not after them that General Manhès went into the forests and mountains of Apulia and Calabria. Disguising himself and roaming about, he plied peasants and shepherds, townsmen and soldiers with drink, testing out the mood of Italy in its hottest and most energetic part, and with the help of Jesuits disguised as peasants sent to him from Vienna, he also found out the names of the leaders and organizers of the Carbonari movement. He discovered that there existed in these parts a huge organization, which aimed at bringing about the self-determination of Italy not only without the aid of Murat and with hatred of Napoleon, but also burning with the desire to overthrow both of them in the name of an unknown, formless, but passionately longed-for liberty. The list of leaders of the Carbonari grew longer and longer. It reached three thousand names. Manhès knew in which hollows, in which charcoal-burners' hovels, in which shepherds' huts in the pastures these men assembled. But he needed to know the name of the leader. And at last he was told. Only then did Murat give the order to take action. While dining with a village priest this Calabrian Carbonaro, Canobianco il Grande, was recognized and arrested by General Manhès and shot on the spot. After that they began to pursue the Carbonari, hewing them down by the sword and burning them out with fire, and forcing the villages to give them up. Manhès disappeared. There was still the North.

In northern Italy, principally in Milan, the adherents of Murat worked and agitated under the leadership of Prina. The most active were the Italian patriots in touch with the South, who formed the party of the principal Carbonaro, Confalonieri, and the Austrian party under the leadership of Gambarana. During this struggle Confalonieri broke up the French Senate in Milan and the mob killed the Minister Prina, the chief collector of money for France from the Italian population. Confalonieri assembled in Milan a huge number of armed peasants and intended to proclaim the independence of Northern Italy, but was thwarted as the result of the bewilderment of the city population. During the period of the liquidation of the authority of the French he failed to create a large-scale movement. On 26th May, 1814, Milan was occupied by the Austrian troops, and on 12th June a huge notice was displayed in the streets of Milan announcing that in virtue of the Paris agreement of the Allied monarchs the fate of the Kingdom of Italy was regarded as settled and all the provinces of Italy north of the River Po were proclaimed irrevocably a component part of the Austrian Empire.

The Kingdom of Naples lasted a little while longer. When Napoleon, who had been banished to Elba, escaped and landed in France on 1st March, 1815, he sent Murat his forgiveness for his treachery with a request for help.

Two weeks later Murat set out from Naples at the head of an army of thirty thousand men. He occupied Rome and the Tuscan region, and began once again to entice the Italians with proclamations promising independence. This time the British frustrated him. The British and Austrian generals compelled him to return on 9th May defeated, and on the 20th of the same month to leave Italy and go into exile. Europe's old acquaintance, the friend of the Austrians, the "legitimate" Catholic King, the Bourbon Ferdinand IV, returned safely to Naples and occupied the throne.

On 18th June, 1815, after ruling the Empire a second time for a hundred days, Napoleon Buonaparte was defeated at Waterloo and shortly afterwards exiled to the island of St. Helena. Murat voluntarily went back to Corsica, his old home. There one day he received a secret letter, telling him that he must come to Italy, that Ferdinand's throne was shaky and that the people in Naples would welcome him back. This letter was written by an old fox maintained by the representatives of the House of Bourbon—Cardinal Medici. Murat believed the letter and fell into the trap. He was seized on the coast on 13th October, 1815. Two hours later a tribunal was set up, solely for the sake of form. The Austrian and British instructions were such that the trial did not last long. The sentence was announced to Murat, and as an old soldier he demanded a squad of Neapolitan riflemen. When the squad lined up, he gave the command, "Take aim!" and with his own hand gave the soldiers the signal to fire at him. Thus ended the French domination in Italy. Now began the activity of His Imperial Majesty, the ruler of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, in reality of the cunning Metternich and the Holy Alliance headed by the crowned gendarme of Russia.

## CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

THE CARBONARI AS A SECRET LEAGUE, WHICH AFTERWARDS EXTENDED THROUGHOUT Italy, aimed above all at the liberation of the bulk of the people speaking the same language from the yoke of all the foreign monarchs, who had separated this single nation into a multitude of petty principalities. States, duchies, monarchies, were given to insignificant men, in most cases relations of the Bourbons, who returned to power in France after the revolution, or relations of the northern Kings who had a good number of "out-of-work" princes among their brothers and sons. This aspiration to "liberate Italy from the barbarians" united all the cells of the Carbonari, which were called "ventas," "venditas" or "lodges" after the fashion of the Masonic organizations. The commonest, lowest cells of the Carbonaro unions were composed of representatives of all classes of Italian society. The old secret organizations of charcoal-burners, labourers, shepherds and those intermediaries who replenished the coffers of the Carbonaro ventas by expropriating the valuables of rich men on the highways and in the towns, were intermingled with new organizations, composed of small landowners, tradesmen, lawyers, doctors and even representatives of the impoverished but ancient Italian aristocracy. In these circles, in contrast to the great mass of the Carbonari, there was a noticeable endeavour

to shape the political programme of Italy as a programme of parliamentary monarchy. And only a great wave of the free folk, mountain dwellers and highwaymen, who realized under the influence of the ideas of the French Revolution the necessity of turning their weapons against all kings in general and against all aristocracy and rich men, infused new aspirations into the Carbonaro movement. This most secret and deepest current of the Carbonaro movement created the supreme, secret, ruling *venta*. The statutes of the Carbonaro *ventas* required a careful selection of the candidates for membership. They laid down that men of certain characteristics and qualities who joined the society were not eligible for membership of a higher unit, and also the kind of character a man must have in order to be admitted to the higher ranks of the conspiratorial movement. The catacombs on the Appian Way near Rome, the Apennine quarries, mountain forests and gorges more and more frequently became the meeting-places of the Carbonari. Pseudonyms, memorizing instead of writing, and inevitable death for treachery characterized the customs and methods of the Carbonari. Their aim was to attract and organize the huge mass of the oppressed and discontented Italian population in order to secure by a general armed insurrection a republican regime in Italy. They attached great importance to work among the troops. Not only in the regiment, but in every company and in every squadron they tried to have, if not Carbonari, at least men they could trust.

One evening a dark-haired young man with enormous eyes and a proud bearing entered the box of Monsignore de Preme and walked with a slight limp towards the edge of the box.

"Here's another Calabrian!" thought Beyle. Then he heard Monsignore Ludovico say: "Signori, I present to you Lord Byron."

A faint, hardly perceptible movement in the box followed these words.

When the first act of *Elena* was over, all went into the reception-room of the box. The English poet turned to a young officer, a tall good-looking Italian standing by the door, whom he greeted as a participator in Napoleon's great northern campaign. The young man replied with a perplexed smile. Monsignore Ludovico intervened, saying that the man whom Byron was looking for was Signor Arrigo Beyle. Thus Byron and Beyle became acquainted and conversed for half an hour about Napoleon and the Russian campaign. In those days Byron was writing the third canto of *Childe Harold*. He had recently arrived in Italy after spending a few days twelve miles from Brussels, wandering about and questioning the witnesses of the Battle of Waterloo.

He had just finished three stanzas of the third canto:

And Harold stands upon this place of skulls,  
The grave of France, the deadly Waterloo!  
How in an hour the power which gave annuls  
Its gifts, transferring fame as fleeting too!  
In "pride of place" here last the eagle flew,  
Then tore with bloody talon the rent plain,  
Pierced by the shaft of banded nations through;  
Ambition's life and labours all were vain;  
He wears the shattered links of the world's broken chain.

Fit retribution ! Gaul may champ the bit  
 And foam in fetters;—but is Earth more free ?  
 Did nations combat to make *One* submit ;  
 Or league to teach all kings true sovereignty ?  
 What ! shall reviving Thralldom again be  
 The patch'd-up idol of enlighten'd days ?  
 Shall we, who struck the Lion down, shall we  
 Pay the Wolf homage ? proffering lowly gaze  
 And servile knees to thrones ? No ; *prove* before ye praise !

If not, o'er one fallen despot boast no more !  
 In vain fair cheeks were furrowed with hot tears  
 For Europe's flowers long rooted up before  
 The trampler of her vineyards ; in vain years  
 Of death, depopulation, bondage, fears,  
 Have all been borne, and broken by the accord  
 Of roused-up millions ; all that most endears  
 Glory, is when the myrtle wreathes a sword  
 Such as Harmodius drew on Athens' tyrant lord.

Admiration for Napoleon as a military genius, in whose fate a year ago England had played such a devastating role, did not prevent Byron from regarding Buonaparte as a tyrannical figure who brought slavery to the nations. Byron availed himself of every opportunity to test the truth of his convictions, but this was masked with a tone of authority which often hindered the person with whom he was talking from expressing himself freely. Beyle was one of those who could give him information. But he did not want to. His sudden reaction was to make him frigid and reserved. Byron did most of the talking. Beyle replied with brief phrases, silently noting that whenever any of those taking part in the conversation wanted to dispute Byron's words, the latter immediately gave him to understand that he was an English lord and therefore "could not make a mistake." The conversation ended with a friendly and courteous request on the part of Byron that he and Beyle "should meet again in the theatre to-morrow." Byron rose and as he left the box made a sign to his companion to follow him. This was his secretary—a handsome man with a proud and independent bearing—an Italian doctor named Polidori. When Beyle returned to the box, he noticed that the eyes of the whole theatre were eagerly searching for the English poet in the box of Monsignore de Breme.

About a month had passed since that evening, and it happened one day that a Venerable of the Carbonari, that is, a deputy master of the Venta, said to Milanese citizen Arrigo Beyle and to the Italian poet Silvio Pellico, who had come with his friend, Maroncelli, and the English poet Byron : "Citizens, first of all, as we do not accept oaths, holding the promise of honest men to be worth more than an oath, we must ask you to give us your word that no matter what turn our cause may take you will never reveal to anyone what you have seen or heard, even under the threat of torture or death."

## CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

RETURNING HOME ARM IN ARM WITH LORD BYRON AFTER THE CUSTOMARY SOIRÉE, Beyle felt cold and shivered. Together with his delight in being near the great



poet he felt something like repentance for having allowed himself to be carried away by curiosity and having entered on a dangerous path.

He had met the English poet for the eleventh time. "The words had long been said which break the last ice of cold reserve of the newly acquainted."

Silvio Pellico talked about Venice. Byron asked about the fate of Venetian comedy, and Silvio mentioned the name of the best poet of Venice—Buratti—who was writing comedies, "which burn the reader with the fire of satirical indignation and poetic wrath."

"Why the reader?" asked Byron. "Are there no spectators in Venice? Is it impossible to see these comedies on the stage?"

"There are no spectators for Buratti's works! Italy may not put them on the stage."

Releasing his arm, Byron half turned towards Pellico and said rapidly: "At which bookseller's in Milan can I find Buratti's plays?"

In reply to this question his companions burst into loud laughter. Byron, who until quite recently flared up at the slightest attempt at contradiction, now laughed and himself joked like a good companion.

"But what am I laughing at?" he asked his friends.

"If Buratti printed even a single line of his comedies, not only he, who is accustomed to being questioned every six months by the gendarmes of Venice, but the bookseller as well would be 'under the leads.'"

Byron frowned at the mention of the terrible Venetian prison situated under the lead roof of the Doges' Palace. When the hot summer sun heated the lead sheets of the palace roof, it became impossible to breathe in this attic prison; the prisoners there often died of a ruptured heart.

Over Milan and the whole of Lombardy spread the nocturnal sky, deep and blue, like a mass of liquid lapis-lazuli. The stars swayed and twinkled like chandeliers in the moonless sky, bathing in a faint silvery light the huge marble forest of Milan Cathedral.

Byron was wondering whether he should go to the Milanese countryside where he lived, enjoying the thousand responses of the local "echo of Simonetta" or to remain in Milan.

"Instead of the thousand responses of Simonetta, which attracts tiresome travellers to my habitation, I think I would rather listen to Beyle's stories about the burning of Moscow," said Byron and he suggested to his friends that they should go up on to the roof of the cathedral.

Having roused the watchman and given him a handsome tip, Byron led his companions by the light of torches up some narrow marble stairs, and by the time he reached the three hundredth step he had already finished with lightning speed the inspired tale about the old Italian Castruccio Castracanti, whom he called "the Napoleon of the Middle Ages." Then, when they were on the roof, he began in a low voice, almost in a whisper, to question Beyle about the character of Napoleon, cautiously eliciting Beyle's opinion as to what would be the attitude of France towards the return of Napoleon from the island of St. Helena.

Beyle noticed that Byron's inspiration reached its highest degree of expressiveness when the replies he received were cold or sceptical. In those moments, by way of contrast, Byron lost his usual abruptness of speech. He seemed to forget his worldly reserve and coldness as soon as he observed these characteristics in the person he was talking to. Not from contrariness but with the slyness of a sensitive person, he shrank into himself when he heard one over-

enthusiastic exclamation or expression of pleasure. Beyle's cold, brief phrases evoked in him a torrent of lucid ideas in varied forms and expressive analogies.

The dispositions of the two men did not adjust themselves immediately. At first some over-coloured descriptions of the Moscow retreat which Beyle gave damped Byron's curiosity and attentiveness. But when Beyle's accounts became dry and his replies cold, almost caustic, Byron himself began to talk rapidly. He admired the republican valour of the twenty-six-year-old Buonaparte, who crossed the Alps to enter Italy. He remarked on the confidence with which the Italians had met Napoleon, his intelligence and the brilliant way in which he replied to the Italians of the city of Brescia when they fervently assured him that the Italians loved their freedom most of all. Saying good-bye to the people of Brescia at the gates of the city, Buonaparte remarked bitterly: "Yes, the Italians love most of all to talk with their mistresses about the liberation of their country."

Here Beyle remarked: "When he became Emperor, Napoleon did not put a stop to the spoliations. The Italian women in the towns and the peasants in the villages know what our army is, not once since the days of Alaric has Rome been subjected to such plunder."

Byron expressed his delight at the fact that Buonaparte had brought from France a whole regiment of savants, archæologists, connoisseurs of art, who set Europe, as never before, on the path of study of the treasures of Italy.

"Only a Frenchman," he remarked, "can now write the history of painting in Italy. Buonaparte has revived the days of the Roman heroes. Like Appius Claudius and Flaminius, he has furrowed Italy with highways, which the country has not known since the days of Hannibal."

Beyle replied: "The French bourgeois and the artillery officers were this time equally interested in a good road. Your new Flaminius was a good business man, who had cannon in the vanguard and commercial baggage-trains in the rearguard. As for the fine arts, remember that Parma, Modena, Bologna and Ferrara gave up all their old pictures and manuscripts to Buonaparte at the point of the bayonet and likewise tens of millions of francs in contributions."

"But you will not deny, M. Beyle," said Byron, "that in the year of Napoleon's rule Lombardy and Milan paid the French exactly half as much as they are now paying the Austrians?"

Monti, who had been listening to this argument in silence, felt a sudden flow of inspiration. The Italian poet, who had written hymns to Napoleon, suddenly boiled with indignation towards Beyle. Standing on the roof beside the railings of finely carved marble high above the city, Monti, having thrown his right arm over his head, began a diatribe on the Austrian yoke. He spoke of how the Austrian rule took from the land half of what it brought to the Italian who cultivated it. He spoke of the salt tax, which made the cost of salt ten times dearer, and of how Germans and Croats filled all the posts for the exploitation of the population, of how the Italians were being persecuted for using their native tongue and only remained in the municipalities if they wrote German and betrayed their fellow-thinkers.

Byron listened in silence without looking at Monti. He looked dull and bored. He suddenly became an ordinary society fop, the same who at his last meeting with Beyle and Monti extolled George Brummell, the founder of dandyism, that peculiar arbiter of trifles, a man whose vogue had been confined to a certain circle of exclusive, titled and blasé English society.

Beyle reflected that Byron, who was bored by Monti's enthusiasm, had

anyway not become a Brummell. He had broken away from his milieu, but while retaining all his old characteristics he also voiced the protest of humanity against the yoke of outworn forms and moribund institutions.

Beyle remembered that he had first heard the name of the English poet in Vilna, which had been occupied by the Neapolitan troops. He remembered the cold air, the streets with the dirty snow in the Jewish quarter and the soiled scrap of newspaper in which there had been an account of the workers' revolt in England and the name of the poet Byron, who had made a speech in the House of Lords in defence of the rebellious weavers. After Byron's departure and this speech in the Lords there was no calumny to which English society would not stoop. The poet was accused of murder and debauchery. The poet laureate Southey heaped insults on him in the Press, and when Byron heard of them he wanted to turn back the Pisa coach and hasten back to England to put an end to his detractor with a pistol shot. Beyle knew that he had been restrained by his friends, who told him that such conduct, if it did not lead to judicial punishment, would in any case give the aristocracy a pretext to support all the indifferent poets, if only they poisoned Byron's life. Beyle thought of how Byron to-day with fire in his eyes had repeated Petrarch's words: "*Liberar l'Italia di barbari.*"

Byron looked at Silvio Pellico and said: "But Monti doesn't realize the close connection between the Austrian and papal yoke. He writes religious hymns and is ready to kiss the hand of any Catholic. And meanwhile, if Metternich patronizes the Pope, the Pope preaches submission to Metternich."

"It is plain that you are a man to be feared," remarked Silvio.

Here Byron had one of his fits of sudden fury. His eyes wandered, his fists were clenched, and he literally quivered with rage and whispered in such a way that everybody heard: "Whenever I enter the door of a drawing-room, all those fools from England and Geneva leave the room."

These words, which were not addressed to anybody, were the reply to his own thoughts. There was an awkward silence, which was only broken by Silvio Pellico, who, as all those present were aware, was translating Byron's poetry into Italian, while Byron was translating Silvio's tragedies into English; he said laughing: "Collect four or five hundred thousand liras and spread the rumour of your death. Two or three devoted friends of yours will bury a coffin containing a log in some wild remote place, the isle of Elba for instance. After a short time the Austrian semaphore will transmit the news of your death to England, and meanwhile under the name of Smith or the Frenchman Dubois you will lead a calm and happy life in Lima. Years will pass, and nothing will prevent Mr. Smith from returning to Europe. By that time his hair will be grey. He will go into a book shop in Rome or Paris and ask the bookseller for a copy of the thirtieth edition of *Childe Harold* or *Lara*. And then the death of Mr. Smith and the resurrection of Byron may take place. You can say: 'The Lord Byron, who is said to have died thirty years ago, is myself; English society seemed to me so stupid that I left it.'"

Byron replied calmly: "My cousin, who will inherit my title, would owe you a warm letter of thanks."

The conversation became general. After some discussion of Maturin's extraordinary novel *Melmoth the Wanderer*, they went on to talk about the characteristics of "the spirit of rebellion," the disillusionment and unrest that had come over Europe. Byron, who was talkative at first, gradually became silent as the Italians took up the subject of conscience tortured by regrets, and

of crimes and their victims. They talked, as men of experience, about disappointments in love. Beyle had already heard gossip about Byron having been the cause of a woman's death. He did not believe it, but he observed with curiosity how the English poet's face changed when listening to the story of a young Italian woman who killed in a duel the lover who had forsaken her, and to the story of an Italian prince who killed a peasant girl from Simonetta for unfaithfulness. It seemed to Beyle that Byron's fit of rage had returned. The English poet was obstinately silent. He was breathing fitfully and heavily and at last declared that it was getting late—it was time to leave the cathedral. Echoing his words, Doctor Polidori said the streets were unsafe and that at night it was better for all of them to go back together, as in the night robbers laid traps at the cross-roads or threw from the roofs iron hoops and lassoes, with which they caught and strangled passers-by. They descended the stairs. Silvio spoke about the madness of love, asserting that love and illness produced the same excesses, and by way of proof cited the sonnet of Tasso in which the poet, sick and tormented, speaks of religion as his only salvation from the eternal struggle with woman's frailty. Silvio recited the sonnet "Odi, Filli." Byron suddenly livened up. The torches of the servants who were lighting the way for them illuminated his pale brow and magnificent eyes that glowed with a passionate sadness.

"Those lines were written under the influence of a bad mood," said Byron pensively, "that is all. Madness and a delicate sensibility alike caused Tasso to seek a false support in religion. He was too much infected with Platonism to start out on the path with the aid of two or three clear arguments. I think that when Tasso wrote that sonnet he had not lost his poetic genius, but probably had neither the wherewithal to live nor a mistress, both of which are necessary for a man to keep alive."

So saying, Lord Byron raised his cane and knocked on the door of the Hotel Adda with it. This was a small two-storeyed house about half a mile from the theatre in a lonely and deserted side street. It was three o'clock in the morning. The knocks with the cane awakened a hollow echo in the neighbouring gardens. The fascinated companions stood in silence round the poet and waited for the door to be opened for him. Beyle thought: "Here is a genius, a real genius! Byron is a beautiful dream of mankind."

When the door closed behind Byron, all went their various ways with scarcely a good-bye. The events of the day seemed to be immensely significant. And, as often happens after having been deeply impressed by something, a man suddenly becomes defenceless at the intrusion of petty annoyances. And this was what happened to many of Byron's companions. Such annoyances, like mosquitoes, are capable of bringing down strong beasts, if they sting them deftly in the eyes.

Henri Beyle felt such a blinding sting at the sudden thought of jealousy and love.

## CHAPTER NINETEEN

BEYLE HAD MADE THE ACQUAINTANCE OF ANGELA PIETRAGRUA WHEN HE WAS still a seventeen-year-old Dragoon in Milan. He was then a mere boy and a dreamer; she was fifteen. She still bore the family name of Borron and waited on her father, who, in the opinion of the enraptured Dragoon, was the most honest of all the tradesmen of Milan.

In 1811, Beyle, a man with a social position, again visited Milan and again experienced his youthful impressions of Italy. But the beautiful Angela was already married. Old Borron gave him her address. He met his Milanese goddess with a thrill. Once again his eyes beheld her magnificent forehead, her lovely curly black hair, arched brows and lively, laughing eyes, her whole figure, slightly rounded, moulded in beautiful classic forms.

She had fallen out with her husband. She hardly recognized Beyle whom she had once called "Chinese" on account of the raised corners of his eyes. But she wanted Beyle to be gay and happy, so that a little happiness might fall to her lot as well. Her eyes laughed artfully and her cheeks glowed.

Beyle's happiness at the time was brief; the affair left its mark on his soul: a painful feeling of distrust of Angela, who was only too ready to betray him.

Now, on this his last arrival, she was living alone. She was free and again asked him to come to her. She was living in Casa Bovara, where he himself had lived in 1811, sixteen years before.

After leaving Byron, Beyle walked quickly in the direction of Casa Bovara. Already for three days little Giulietta, Angela's niece, had been warning him that all was not well, but "it was repulsive and painful to mix love with suspicion." He paid no attention to Giulietta's hints and entreaties. He was convinced that sharing his thoughts and understanding his feelings, Angela had no need to deceive him. He was a sufficiently ardent lover, a good conversationalist gifted with a rich imagination and ideas, he was not tiresome; he left her to herself enough for her not to find him oppressive. He was not even jealous. But to-day he felt ill at ease. Recently he had been feeling annoyance and resentment against everybody, who by an unfortunate allusion had pained the delicate sensibility of the English poet. All had vied with one another in voicing their suspicions that Byron was a murderer and that the "Bride of Abydos" was not written in vain. But to-day it was not Byron but Beyle himself who was in such an agonized mood; everything seemed to be built on falsehood and deception; the best way to convince himself of his mistake was to restore his confidence in his beloved in her arms.

Quietly he approached the house and walked several times from the corner to the door before making up his mind to do anything. The big lamp had not yet gone out; the town had that quiet and freshness that precedes the dawn. A happy couple crossed a distant street, laughing and kissing. Beyle went up to Giulietta's little window and tapped three times on the leaden frame. A minute later the sleepy girl, wrapped in a shawl, appeared in the gateway, shook her head and led him up the back stairs. Putting her finger to her lips, she led him on tiptoe to the familiar door, and placing her hand on the nape of his neck, bent his head towards the keyhole. The lighted room was in complete disorder. Pillows, sheets, blankets lay on the floor. On the bed Angela lay naked in the arms of a stranger. Beyle sprang away and rushed down the stairs. He neither gasped, nor trembled, nor felt angry. The excited state in which he went down the stairs suddenly gave place to a cold curiosity. He felt an infinite regret for his lost illusions, the same kind of sense of frustration which one experiences after having incurred a big expenditure on something unnecessary.

An hour passed. The streets began to stir with life. Peasants from surrounding villages, in bullock-drawn carts with solid wooden wheels as in ancient times, moved slowly towards the vegetable markets. A noise was heard from the other side of the door, the clatter of a falling key; the door

opened and a man in a grey jacket and grey hat came out. He had reddish whiskers, a hooked nose, a pock-marked face. "Why, it's Giuseppe Bossi, the shopman who stands behind her father's counter!" thought Beyle, concealing himself behind a drainpipe.

When the self-satisfied and red-faced shopman had vanished round the corner, Beyle tapped again on the same window. Giulietta, her eyes wide with terror, admitted Beyle, looking at his hands and whispering: "For God's sake, only not now! You can't be responsible for yourself at present!"

"Poor girl! She thought I had been to get pistols," thought Beyle, adding aloud: "Don't worry."

Beyle knocked on the door. A faint, sleepy voice replied. The door opened. Beyle sat down beside the bed.

It was already dark in the room, for the light had gone out. Angela lay in a crumpled lace chemise and pretended that the sun peeping through the curtain hurt her sleepy eyes. She was, of course, pleasantly surprised.

"Undress, Chinese, what are you dawdling for?"

Beyle smiled, not knowing at once what to answer. Then he stood up. He would have walked about the room, but his legs refused to obey him; he sat down again. "I must control myself at all costs, so that neither sorrow nor madness may come near me," he thought to himself. And almost mechanically he asked: "Well, how did you sleep?"

"I had a lovely sleep and I've been waiting for you impatiently," she replied.

"Listen, dear friend, we once agreed that there was no reason for you to be afraid to tell me anything about yourself?"

"Ah, Arrigo! Spare these outpouring of a sensitive soul. Don't go on again about the past. I was light-headed, I behaved frivolously, you know that. But I told you everything and I've nothing more to tell you."

She closed her eyes, yawned sweetly, stretched herself out on the bed and, turning her head towards him, slowly raised her bluish eyelashes. Her enormous eyes gazed at him, laughing and trusting, infinitely devoted and carefree at the same time.

"But really, Henri! What a fool you are! Don't you know that I belong to you entirely?"

Then, seeing his cold, keen eyes, she was overcome with surprise. She threw up her hands as though expressing utter incomprehension and at the same time inviting him into her arms.

His thoughts ran on with incredible swiftness. Only ten days ago that inviting, voluptuous movement would have been enough. He would have killed anyone who said that Angela was lying. Now, she herself deprived him of that right. He said to her calmly: "It seems you have not told me everything. But what can love signify without confidence? Do you wish that our book should be full of blank pages?"

Slight annoyance in the form of a wrinkle appeared for a second on Angela's face, but raising her eyebrows, she quickly banished the wrinkle and, sighing, replied in the tone in which one talks to a hopeless fool: "Ah, Henri, you're always talking about books and pages. But I tell you I've told you everything, and you know all about my life in all its details, the most uninteresting and boring details. Now, dear Dominique, stop being a Venetian Brighella. Smile!"

Dominique—this was the gentle, agreed name adopted by Beyle in his secret correspondence with his Milanese friends.

How could she remember that name now, for the first time in this first year

of his third sojourn in Milan? The series of ecstatic nights and clandestine<sup>c</sup> trips to the islands, the paths around Setignano, in the huge thickets of the gardens of Boboli, in Florence, in Cascine, in a bamboo grove—the name Dominique brought back all these happy hours and the thousands of caresses that had accompanied them.

"I did not love you for nothing. You are a woman of infinite talent. You possess the capacity, in resurrecting my past, to forget your own past and even to forget your present. But don't you know that the past is dangerous to the present only when it is known to the bitter end?"

"Henri, you're unbearable. I'm tired of your humiliating questions. Tell me straight out what you want, or go away."

"In that voice, full of dignity and nobility, there is so much sincerity and simplicity, and so much justified anger that any outside witness would hate the inquisitor-lover," thought Beyle, rising to his feet. "She wants to slip away into the depths and hide like a fish, under the stones at the bottom, this woman. One must make sure that she has the opportunity." He decided to take his leave saying only: "I can forgive you positively everything and even the fact that you consider me a fool. But bear in mind that if you had not been afraid and thought little of your past deceptions, the present one would never have occurred."

But now an unexpected scene took place. Angela sprang up, her face distorted with rage. Before Beyle stood a spiteful Milanese tradeswoman, clad only in her chemise which had slipped from her shoulder, satisfied to the point of satiety, exhausted by the red-haired athlete. She screamed in a stifled, hoarse voice: "Out! Get out! You have insulted me! You dare to persecute an honest woman who has given you her whole soul!"

"Enough!" said Beyle. "You're mixing me up with your father's shopman, Giuseppe. You should leave the key in the lock: the keyhole is too big. One can see all that goes on in the room."

So saying he picked up his hat which had fallen to the floor and laid his hand on the door knob.

Angela stood for a moment as though stupefied. Then a terrible pallor took the place of the red glow on her cheeks. She rushed over to Beyle and caught him by the arm.

"Don't go away, I implore you, stay a minute. I'll tell you everything. I won't hide anything. I know how right you are!"

Beyle did not listen to her. Groaning and stretching out her hands to him, she crawled on her knees after him to the door, catching hold of the hem of his coat and imploring him to stay. Without looking round, Beyle ran out into the street.

Next morning Giulietta brought him a letter, in which the grateful Signora Angela informed him that the shopman Giuseppe Bossi held the life of her father, a ruined old man, in his hands and that she had been obliged to yield in order to save old Borron from shame.

Little Giulietta sat on the sofa while Beyle read the letter.

He tossed it on to the table and paced up and down the room, uttering aloud: "What a rascal I've been! How could I grossly insult her in my ignorance? What would any other woman have done in her place? This is a serious and difficult moment."

Then glancing at Giulietta, he asked whether her aunt's liaison with Giuseppe Bossi had been going on for long.

"A long time, Signor Arrigo. Bossi spent the last two years in Havana on business affairs, and since the day he returned they renewed their nightly meetings. Whenever you are told that you cannot come, Bossi and others are there every time. Signor Arrigo, I want to go away to France. It is not good for me here."

"I've had enough of illusions," thought Beyle, and turning to the girl, he said: "There is no answer."

In the evening Beyle did not find any of his friends at the theatre. The box of Monsignore Ludovico emptied after the first act. Beyle went behind the scenes and tapped on a door bearing the inscription: "Elena Viganò."

A sonorous voice replied: "Come in."

The pretty singer was seated in front of a mirror, tidying her hair. Without turning round, she held out her left hand to Beyle over her shoulder. He raised her fingers to his lips and began to tell her about a projected trip to Venice with friends. La Viganò expressed herself delighted. After a few insignificant phrases Beyle got up to take his leave.

Elena, without turning round, said to him: "Listen, Beyle, is it true? They say you're in love with me."

Half turning, with his hand already on the handle of the door, he replied: "They have been lying to you," and went out.

On returning to the Casa Acerbi and opening the glass door into the corridor on the second floor, he saw in the half darkness at the end of the corridor, a woman gliding towards him. As she came nearer he saw that she wore a blue dress. The dark chestnut hair descending in long curls about her temples, the large dark eyes, the small bright-red lips, the lilac rings round the eyes, the tender oval of the face—all this was strangely familiar to him. She looked at him with indifference, and behind her, limping slightly, walked a tall, shapely man in a dusty travelling suit, his dark hair parted in the middle. Both were coming apparently from the doors of his room. When the woman was but three paces away from him, long heavy aquamarine earrings flashed in her ears, and only by these Beyle recognized her. Her expression changed and became gay and affectionate: she was quicker in recognizing him. It was his sister Pauline, who had altered beyond recognition, having turned from a charming but timid girl into a pretty, self-assured woman.

Pointing to her companion, she announced to Beyle that this was her husband.

"Monsieur Périer Lagrange, I am very glad to see you," said Beyle. "How long, Pauline?"

"What do you mean 'how long.' You know."

"I mean how long is it since you arrived."

"The stage-coach was four hours late; a wheel came off at a turning and the postilion was killed. We've been here about half an hour. Put us up for to-night; to-morrow we shall be going on."

They went into Beyle's huge room. While Périer Lagrange adjusted a broken shoe lace and changed his travelling clothes, Beyle ordered supper.

As he listened at supper to their accounts of France, Beyle constantly caught himself thinking that if he had not been feeling such excruciating pain at the thought of Angela's faithlessness, he would even now, as ten days ago, have been spending the night with her like the most ardent eighteen-year-old lover.



"How much women lose when they lie to a man like me! A woman capable of realizing this could be really happy with me."

"Henri, you're not listening," said Pauline. "I'm telling you about the shooting of Marshal Michel Ney, who was with you in the Moscow campaign, for joining Buonaparte."

Beyle looked at her, realizing that he had not been paying the slightest attention to her story. Suddenly the blood surged to his head; his temples throbbed violently and he was forced to close his eyes. His sister and her husband rushed over and applied pieces of ice from the champagne bucket and wet napkins to his forehead.

Tall, shapely Lagrange, calm and sad, like all who suffer from heart trouble, adjusted Beyle's pillows with an imperturbable look. Pauline and the old servant Sofia took off his shoes. Beyle was raving: he shouted like a drunken dragoon before an attack, like a desperate gambler staking his life on a card. An hour later the doctor let some blood and said that it was sunstroke—probably the result of the terrible heat that day.

"Between noon and four o'clock only dogs and Englishmen went out in the street, but honest Christians stay in the shade. If our friend is not a Carbonaro, why the devil did he go roaming about the town when everybody was asleep? If he still has fever in the morning, the cupping glasses must be applied again. But there is no cause for alarm; he seems a healthy fellow and should get over worse sunstrokes than this."

The doctor went away. An hour later no trace of the "sunstroke" remained. Beyle was calmly continuing his conversation with his relatives.

In the morning, after seeing the visitors off, he feverishly set about writing up his recent observations and impressions of the picture galleries of Italy. In the evening, having worked all day almost without a break, he finished the book Byron had said was so necessary—*The History of Painting in Italy*. In looking over the opening chapters of the huge manuscript he came across the rough draft of an old letter. It was his own letter from Bologna, written on 25th October, 1811. It ran:

Dear Sirs,

I have completed a work on *The History of Painting in Italy* from the days of the Renaissance to the present time. This work in two volumes is the fruit of three years' travel and research. The work of Lanzi served me as a guide. I propose to send my work to Paris to be printed. I beg you to make the preliminary announcements of the publication of these two volumes in 8vo. at the end of the present year.

M. B. A. A.

The paper had grown yellow with age, the ink was faded. Six years had passed since then. The MSS. of the volumes that were to have been advertised had been lost in the Russian campaign.

"The Cossacks devoured them or used them for wads," wrote Beyle to one of his friends. "It is a pity, for they comprised twelve copy-books with gilt edges, bound in coloured morocco."

Now everything had been re-written. Every page was imbued with the atmosphere of Rome and every artist spoke with the living tongue of modernity. For this reason Beyle inserted an inscription in the form of an epigraph on the first volume:

*The brothers Caracci departed from the affectation which was the fashion of those days, and for this reason they appeared to be indifferent.*

In the second volume there is a brief inscription in English: "To the happy few." Then comes the general title page, carefully laid out.

"Why not sign with the old signature of 1811?" thought Beyle. "So we'll leave 'M.B.A.A.' That will be all the better because in the *History of Painting* there are a good many attacks on the Hapsburg monarchy. It is better to remain in obscurity and to live unobserved without coming out anywhere under one's own name." He made a parcel of the two volumes and wrote a request to Mareste in Paris to give the manuscript to Monsieur Didot for the press. Then he rose, rubbed his weary brows with his fingers, dressed and set out for the theatre.

Just by the Scala he caught sight of a group of men gesticulating wildly. Coming nearer, he recognized Byron; his eyes were aflame, his lips twitched, his fists were clenched and his whole figure expressed intense, barely restrained fury. Beside him stood Silvio Pellico, shouting something and gesticulating. With a gesture full of dignity Confalonieri invited Beyle to take part in their expedition, which was headed by Monsignore de Breme and his brother, the Marquis Sarticiana, against Santa Margherita, where the Austrian guards had arrested Byron's secretary, Polidori. Beyle joined the group of fifteen men, and the whole procession moved towards the police headquarters. They went up to the building of the disused monastery of Santa Margherita and insistently demanded an explanation. It turned out that the Austrian police officer, who was keeping watch on Byron in the theatre, had sat in the parterre without removing his fur hat. This annoyed Polidori, who, after asking the Austrian three times to take it off, lost his patience and knocked it off. He was immediately seized by the gendarmes. Byron did not immediately hear of Polidori's arrest, and when he was informed, flew into an indescribable rage.

The whole group entered the guard-house. The officer arrogantly demanded that the names of the visitors should be taken down. On reading the names of Confalonieri, de Breme, Monti and other respected citizens of Milan, he was somewhat embarrassed and told Byron that he would set Polidori free. But colliding with one of the visitors he dropped his hat, and thereupon his ridiculously small stature, which had been somewhat masked by the exaggeratedly tall hat, was revealed. Polidori burst out laughing again. The Austrian lost his self-restraint, called him a revolutionary and said he was well aware of the activities of many of those present. Monti and Confalonieri demanded an explanation. The Austrian immediately changed his tone and said that he took back everything he had said, adding that it was nothing more than a joke.

On the way back to the theatre Byron, having calmed down a little, went up to Beyle and said: "I fear I shall have to leave Milan in a hurry. This is very likely the last time we shall see each other. It gave me great pleasure to hear your account of the northern campaign. I am very grateful to you for it. I purposely spoke to you on the roof of Milan cathedral about the snow of Moscow. Nothing reminds one so much of snowdrifts and plains of snow as the marble slabs of the cathedral roof gleaming in the moonlight. But you are right: the slavery of Moscow is more terrible than the yoke of Austria."

At the door of the hotel, Polidori and Byron caught sight of the gendarme Tribolati, who had long been keeping watch on Byron. With a smile he handed Polidori an order to leave Austrian territory immediately. Politely and even

sympathetically Tribolati suggested to Byron that he should change his place of domicile in Italy. This was said in a gentle manner and without indicating any definite period. Polidori, forgetting all restraint, rent the night air with imprecations against Austria, promising to return soon this time not for words but for deeds. This promise was not fulfilled, as two years later Polidori was poisoned by prussic acid and died instantaneously while getting ready for a journey. Tribolati had concluded the second volume of his opus on the Carbonaro movement.

Distracted from his painful thoughts by the expedition to Santa Margherita, Beyle returned home and fell asleep.

## CHAPTER TWENTY

MONSIEUR HENRI BEYLE GOES FROM MILAN TO ROME, FROM ROME TO NAPLES, FROM Naples to Florence, and from Florence, at the request of Pauline, to his native town, Grenoble. Monsieur Henri Beyle is a bored traveller, who is not occupied with any literary task. At a concert he sits next to the musician, Zingarelli, and converses with him. The latter looks at Monsieur Henri Beyle, a witty, interesting man, and then forgets all about his conversation with him. And when Monsieur Bombet relates his conversation with Zingarelli in the *Literary Gazette of Padua*, Carpani again declares that "this demon Bombet is an absolutely mythical figure," because he, Carpani, "sat next to Zingarelli at the concert" and he, Carpani, "firmly remembers that Zingarelli did not converse with any Monsieur Bombet during the whole evening."

"Evidently Bombet has a wild imagination, to say nothing of sheer mendacity," remarks Carpani.

His imagination was indeed wild. But perhaps reality was able to speak to him in a language which was unknown to Signor Carpani. Anyway, the controversy was exhausted, there was nothing to be said to Carpani. Monsieur Bombet had disappeared, and Monsieur Beyle, to avoid difficulties with the police, left for the south of Italy.

It was a hot day. On the bank of the little River Adda two carriages were waiting for the ferryman. The little ferry-boat was slumbering on the other side. The ferryman lay on the roof of his cabin, gazing lazily at the river. An Austrian gendarme, looking as important as a cock, strutted up and down the bank. At last some carriages arrived on the other side. An open carriage drove on to the ferry, the ferryman unhurriedly manipulated the cable, and five minutes later the ferry-boat moored at the bank. On the way up, the open carriage caught its axle against Beyle's carriage and lurched. A lady in a black dress put out her hand to prevent herself from falling. Beyle took the hand and supported its frightened owner. Her fright expressed itself only in her eyes. Large, brown, in a beautiful pale oval face, they lit up for a second and then assumed their usual expression. As she bent to pick up her travelling cloak, she disclosed a shapely, supple waist. A gust of wind revealed a lock of dark gold hair on her temple, her lips moved slightly and she murmured: "*Grazie tante, signore.*"

The whole incident did not take more than a couple of minutes. The carriage ascended the hill, and the carriage in which Beyle was driving descended to the ferry.

Who was the lady? She reminded one so much of the Herodias of the

Leonardo school with her fascinating smile and its peculiar expression of a refined and complex mind, a smile which gave the magic reflection of enigmatical sentiments and bewitching spiritual excitements. She was the perfect type of the woman of Lombardy, known from time immemorial, encountered in the pictures of the Milanese school and even earlier, engraved in the legends of the Longobard kings in the shape of the fair-haired daughter of Desiderius, smiling the same smile, with the same inclination of the head adorned with a light iron crown. All the way to Florence the unknown lady's smile lit up Beyle's mind. She came to life everywhere before his eyes. He found her reflection in the gilded evening sky over Florence, she gazed at him in Rome, when he ascended the Janiculum in the morning and sat on his favourite seat near the oak of Torquato Tasso. He sensed her presence on the Palatine hill, as he gazed at the blue Alban mountains and inhaled the light thyme-scented air. The golden brown rocks in the sea at Cape Miseno reminded him of the colour of her eyes. Everything he saw and heard invariably reminded him of her appearance, her voice, her quiet smile. Yet not for a moment did he feel a desire to find out who she was. For the first time in life his feelings were completely unaccountable and his mind was devoid of curiosity. In Rome, with an impetuosity unusual for him, he did all he had been asked to do. He delivered two letters from Confalonieri in Naples, and a letter in Rome to Signore Vismara, in whose house he was asked to stay. He needed to make inquiries about ancient Rome for his travel sketches. Vismara, a Carbonaro, who was in love with Rome, had an excellent library. All the walls were hung with Piranesi engravings. There was the round temple of Vesta, the Palatine. A small engraving depicting a corner of the Coliseum. The chiaroscuro turned this scrap of paper into an enormous window, through which were seen eighteen corridors with their arches. In Vismara's bedroom the walls were hung with a series of engravings by the same master. These were *carceri*, prisons and castles, staircases, vaults, passages, crypts, towers, drawbridges, parapets, machicolations. A mad, wild fantasy. It was not what Beyle wanted. He asked Vismara to give him books on classical Rome.

"But all this is related to Rome, all this is *Roma*, all this is *romantic*."

"You don't understand, Vismara, that what I want is the classic, sprung from the Greek soil, pure antiquity, without what you have felicitously termed *romanticism*, that is to say, the Roman incrustation on antiquity! I will use the word you have invented. The romantics and the classics are the two banks of the stream of social wonderment. The classics are the right bank people of yesterday's tastes, the artists of yesterday's feast of life. I myself am a romantic-pioneer, who has anchored on the left bank despite the screams of Chateaubriand and Madame de Staël."

"Well, if you want pure antiquity, take the German Winckelmann, a distant relation of mine."

Thus from this conversation there arose for the first time the two literary terms: *romantic and classic*. And the same day, in reading the biography of Winckelmann, Beyle recalled the native place of that connoisseur of art, the little Saxon town of Stendhal, or the mediæval Stendelia with fifteen towers on its fortress walls. Ten years previously, when Beyle had left Brunswick in his capacity of Commissaire des guerres, who had levied an incredible contribution on the region and barely escaped from the armed mob, he hid for three days in this little town under an assumed name and rested in an hotel. A young fair-haired German girl, who took him for a wandering count, showed

him extraordinary favour. It was in this town that the gifted Winckelmann had grown up, it was this town that the peasants had attacked, under the leadership of Katt, with the intention of throwing out the French.

Having finished his travel sketches, *Rome, Naples and Florence*, Beyle prepared them for the press and instead of his own name he signed the title page with a new pseudonym, the name of the town: "Stendhal" and added by way of explanation: "Officer of French cavalry."

Beyle realized for the first time how relations unknown to other people are established between the artist and reality. In describing Rome, Naples and Florence, Beyle, keeping watch on himself, discovered new phenomena. French cavalry officer Stendhal was filled with a flood of unprecedented emotions which coloured all objects. Impressions crystallized in his imagination, and having crystallized, shone with unexpected lights in the brightness of the day. Each facet of the crystal was the facet of a subtle and radiant substance, and all objects were broken up anew through this prism of crystallized impressions.

"One thing is clear: that apart from the artist, reality itself possesses the capacity to awaken subtle and complex sensations of beauty," thought Beyle. "Not for nothing does the artist consciously select and string together impressions. But the artist is himself a part of reality. And therefore the activity of the imagination, pouring itself out in creative forms, is the birth of a new reality, the art of changing the world. And the stronger the seething passions of the mind, the more solid and precious is the re-moulding of reality, the more beautiful emerges the world from the hands of its real creator—man."

Enrico Vismara well says that the Roman Carbonaro will carry the Roman revolution into the world, romanticism as the Roman conception of the world, will break up the world of classical tradition and will turn old Europe into a world republic.

The third book was launched in the world. Delaunay published in Paris the volume *Rome, Naples and Florence*, written by "Stendhal—officer of French cavalry." Meanwhile Didot applied to M. Bombet with a proposal to re-issue the *Life of Haydn*, which had created quite a stir. And at the time when old Behr was transporting new French books to Germany, in the windows of the Paris bookshops appeared new editions of the *Life of Haydn* without the name of the author.

Herr Ekkermann, the secretary of the Weimar Minister, Privy Councillor von Goethe, bought some new French books from Behr and took them to Weimar.

In March 1818, having finished reading the new books, sorting out antique cameos and describing marble statues, old Goethe wrote a letter to his friend, the musician Zelter, concluding with the words:

I gather these details from an original book by Stendhal, an officer of the French cavalry. You ought to be interested in him. The name he writes under is a pseudonym. He is a Frenchman, a traveller, with a lively wit, a passionate admirer of music, dancing and the theatre. He attracts and repels, he captivates and fills you with impatience, and in the end it is impossible to tear oneself away from his books. He seems to me to be one of those great talents, which have sprung up in the whirlwind of war and revolution and hide under the guise of officers, officials or spies, or perhaps all three together.

It was easy for the unerring old man to realize that it was a Frenchman

who was hiding under a German name. Why, indeed, should a German Stendhal write a book in French in Paris, describing his Italian impressions of three cities in the Apennine peninsula? But far more difficult was the position of the Viennese bookseller, who was requested by the Austrian police to find out by all means, at Delaunay's in Paris, who was this French cavalry officer Stendhal, who had spoken so insolently of the Austrian rule in Italy. Delaunay showed this agent of Sedlnitzky, the Austrian Minister of Police, a letter of the *notaire* Laroche, the attorney of this cavalry officer, Baron Stendhal, who was travelling in Italy. And while Beyle was returning to Milan along the river Olona, the artful Jesuits were at the same time making inquiries in the hotels and boarding-houses of Rome, Naples and Florence.

*No trace of the French cavalry officer Stendhal was to be found anywhere.*

Beyle returned to Milan to all intents and purposes in a pacific mood. But underneath the equable surface of M. Beyle seethed the impulsive and tempestuous temperament of the Carbonaro Stendhal, officer of French cavalry. From that moment he seemed to lead a double life, and this was obvious even to his friends. Stendhal wrote, printed and existed no one knew where. He was being sought and tracked down, but M. Beyle, the bourgeois with aristocratic pretensions, led an indolent sort of life in Milan, dallying at the Opera, going out for rides on horseback and wandering from town to town in Austrian Italy.

An anonymous Italian work entitled *Romanticismo* appeared in Florence.

Everybody read it with delight, but nobody knew that the author was the Frenchman Beyle.

Pauline informed Beyle of the death of her husband at Grenoble.

He must go to France. Again the stage-coach, again the road, again the blue coach with the Austrian mail crest on the box, drawn by six horses, with a disguised gendarme instead of a postilion. A cold Alpine wind blew from the north, there were halts on the shore of Lake Como. And there was a second encounter with the mysterious lady. A carriage in which she sat drove quickly past. She glanced absentmindedly out of the window, while continuing her conversation with her companion of whom Beyle caught a glimpse. He appeared very thin, he wore a black cloak and was without a hat; his hair was a fiery red; his face was emaciated and pale, with huge burning eyes, like a bird of prey in the cage of a zoological garden. Beyle had seen that face somewhere. Yes, he recognized him. Once, late at night, he had seen the man at Confalonieri's. He was Italy's greatest poet, the exile Ugo Foscolo.

At one time an ardent partisan of Buonaparte, Foscolo had been an officer of the Cisalpine Legion. General Masséna had always singled him out. Under his banners Foscolo marched against the Austrians, but suddenly, after the battle of Marengo, he had left the army and called Buonaparte the betrayer of Italy. Then appeared his book *The Last Letters of Jacopo Ortis*, a celebrated novel, published at the expense of Traversi, which made a stir throughout Europe. In this book were the remarkable words: "Our country has been sacrificed. Everything has perished, and we live like ghosts, bewailing our shame and our misfortunes. I despair of my native country, I despair of my own self. Italy is an unhappy country! The prey of fatal centuries! The victim of conquerors! I must look dry-eyed, in impotent rage at the men who have plundered my country and betrayed it."

After these passionate words he wrote his discourses to Buonaparte which were not printed but circulated in manuscript. These were Foscolo's comments

on the deliberations of the Cisalpine deputies summoned by Buonaparte. Foscolo was the author of tragedies which were banned by Buonaparte. He was a splendid poet, with a fine mastery of the wonderful music of the tongue. Foscolo had written satires on emperors. He was a persecuted man, twice exiled, equally hated by Napoleon of France and Franz of Austria. How could he appear so boldly on the Austrian roads in a carriage with this Lombard beauty? And who was she, who was travelling so boldly with a man whom everybody thought to be living somewhere in Scotland?

The dust of the road has already long disappeared. The hack he is now riding, its hooves drumming softly in the snow, has long been slowly mounting the steep St. Gothard road. Beyle holds the reins in his numbed left hand. From time to time he raises himself in the stirrups to ease his stiff legs, but his thoughts are still in the orange gardens and myrtle groves and green vineyards of Lombardy. Every time he thinks of the unknown woman he compares her to an orange tree. Looking around, gazing at an eagle soaring above a snowy cliff, at the mountain tracks down which the Austrian artillery is slowly descending, Beyle by way of contrast thinks of that mysterious stranger; he feels her absence more and more acutely, in proportion as the wall of the Alps rises behind, between him and Milan. At the same time, as he continues northward, he is conscious of pain: an aching pain creeps into his heart at the thought of how much of his life has been given up to wanderings on the road.

How many days in the year does he spend in one place, apart from the road? This is life in a stage-coach!

Now he was approaching the little township of Claix. Here had been the vineyard belonging to his father. The old man had sold it, as Pauline had written. During the halt Beyle went timidly up to the hedge, taking precautions against being recognized. A peasant in leather trousers, a grey hat and a blouse crossed by bright yellow braces stood by the hedge armed with a sickle and looked with surprise and suspicion at Beyle as he approached. This was the new owner of the vineyard.

Beyle took out a coin and asked him to cut a few bunches of grapes. The peasant did so, still looking at him suspiciously. Beyle hurried back to the carriage and slowly ate the grapes as he drove along. The last bunch was still intact when he arrived at his father's house in the rue des Vieux Jésuites in Grenoble.

## CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE

RAINY DAYS. AFTER A QUARREL WITH HIS FATHER ON ACCOUNT OF PAULINE, Beyle sought distraction from his gloomy thoughts by going for a ride. In spite of the weather his sister came with him. They revisited the places to which he had been fond of going with his boyhood companions, the Bigillions. Now, having ascended the wooded ridge of the Dauphiné and inhaling the resinous, cold and unusually light mountain air, he gazed at the blue, dark-green and purple mountains that spread out before him, covered with forests and stretching away into the boundless distance of the horizon, where the hazy, almost transparent mountain ridge merged with the clouds. A blue haze lay over everything. Here and there blue lakes could be seen in the dark green expanses of the forests. There was first-rate sport in these forests. Old

Gagnon's steward used to talk about the badgers, foxes, and game birds inhabiting these wild wooded parts. Beyle remembered St. Hubert's day in a forest lodge, when there had been a meet near Saint-Ismier and he, only a little boy, was knocked over by the English hounds.

Pauline shared her brother's tastes. She was proud of Henri's reputation as a marksman. She herself rode well and would have been hunting again but for her mourning veil that descended to her left shoulder.

Returning home, brother and sister decided to leave for Milan the next day without waiting to be reconciled with their father.

Their parting was by no means sad, for the road to the south seemed fabulously good to both of them. At the prospect of Milan, Pauline soon forgot her sorrow, and her brother counted the miles with unprecedented impatience.

In the stage-coach, whenever Beyle dozed off, nodding his head at the jolting of the springs, Pauline liked to read. She wanted to learn a good deal about the Italy of these last years. She had brought with her a new book entitled *Rome, Naples and Florence in 1817*. She did not agree with many of the author's arguments, but being tolerant and gentle she always tried to reconcile opposing views and to find a justification for everything. She frankly told her brother that some of Stendhal's arguments seemed to her superficial and intentionally mischievous, but that he was evidently a man of great intelligence, though of shallow sentiment.

"You see, he is a cavalryman, and I remember what frivolous types cavalry officers are. You know that yourself, Henri," she said, addressing her brother.

Her brother almost always agreed; in some cases he advised her to pay less attention to the author and to go deeper into the subjects with which he dealt.

"You know, I'm none too fond of this Stendhal myself. At times he seems to me to be a regular windbag."

The public in the stage-coach sometimes took part in the arguments. A merchant from Bologna and a doctor from Naples were acquainted with Stendhal's book. Both of them took a highly unfavourable view of the author and said that this officer Stendhal was infected with a real Jacobin spirit and was rather a dangerous person. Beyle immediately agreed with them and related a number of most absurd anecdotes which he had heard about "this Stendhal," and was not sparing of the rudest names and caustic epithets. Then Pauline stood up for the author, and Henri Beyle was delighted, hearing in this defence the voice of his own blood.

"But I suspect you of having some kind of affinity with this Stendhal," she said to him one day.

Pauline was particularly interested in the circle of Count Porro. She had heard that the best people of Germany, France and Italy were to be met at his house. Beyle mentioned the Schlegels, Madame de Staël, Silvio Pellico, Lord Byron, Lord Brougham, Borsieri, Ludovico de Breme and especially Federigo Confalonieri. The latter was a splendid representative of the human species with a broad political temperament, a powerful mind, an iron character, an unbreakable will, in a word, a combination of human qualities, which was not to be found in this miserable France, which sent all energetic men to the galleys. During one of these characteristic descriptions the voice of an old man—a neighbour in the stage-coach—suddenly resounded: "Confalonieri? That liberal? A highly dangerous man!" said the old man in a husky bass voice, moving his yellow sunken cheeks and lips. Having said this, he took



out a blue flask, removed the cork and poured some green liqueur into a gold goblet. When he raised the gold goblet to his toothless mouth, a gold ring with a big ecclesiastical seal of cornelian gleamed on his long bony fingers, and the black agate rosary hidden in his sleeve was revealed. The black cross on the end of the rosary dangled from under his lace cuff. Having drunk three glasses of liqueur, the old man livened up and glaring at Beyle with the ardent, angry eyes of a fanatic, he said:

"Italy needs an executioner not in the scarlet robes of a cardinal but in a white dress. The Pope of Rome will shortly give his blessing to this cause. The country has forgotten God and that is the cause of all the misfortunes and evil of the times. Your Buonaparte was a real spirit of darkness, but he was sent as a punishment. Only the great Hapsburg and Romanov rulers of the north have realized the truth of the Church. Soon there will be no Confalonieris in Italy."

Beyle pretended to be exhausted by the journey. He yawned almost in the old man's face, closed his eyes and a minute later actually fell asleep, leaving Pauline and the other passengers to carry on the conversation with the old Jesuit. He noted how explicit the old hypocrite's prophecies were, and he made a mental note to tell Confalonieri of this encounter at the first opportunity.

Having passed the mountain slopes and descended into the green plains of Lombardy, Beyle experienced an overwhelming sense of joy, hitherto unknown to him. Never before had France seemed to him so tarnished, and never before had Italy lured him so strongly as on this return. Lombardy was for him light and air, that without which a man is unable to live. During the month of his trip to the north he had felt a weariness which he himself could not understand. Now, with each relay of the stage-coach, his heart beat more impatiently. In his ears rang without ceasing the lilting music of the lines :

*Bella Italia, amate sponde,  
Pur vi torno a riveder !  
Trema in petto e si confonde  
L'anima oppressa dal piacer.  
Tua bellezza, che di pianti  
Fonte amara ognor ti fu,  
Di stranieri e crudi amanti  
T'avea posta in servitù.  
Ma bugiarda e mal sicura  
La speranza fia de' re :  
Il giardino di natura  
No, per barbari non è.<sup>1</sup>*

Monti, that chameleon who was perpetually changing his colour, had so many times hailed the various rulers of Italy and so many times changed his coat that it was difficult to find the man himself under his masks. But the living passions of a poet seethed in him; his poetry was so melodious and sonorous that one could forgive him everything for the sake of these lines about Italy from his *Battle of Marengo*.

<sup>1</sup> Beautiful Italy, beloved land, I return to see you once again ! My heart overflowing with pleasure trembles in my breast. Your beauty, which has been a bitter source of woe to you, has placed you in the thrall of foreign and uncouth lovers. But their hopes will not be fulfilled: the garden of Nature is not for barbarians.

Monti had welcomed Suvorov; he had welcomed Buonaparte; he had welcomed Austrian rule with a play on the words "Austria" and "Astrea." How much more agreeable, more sincere and honest was little Silvio Pellico with his childish face, round spectacles and uplifted eyebrows than this crafty courtier with the face of a partridge and lips pursed in the shape of a tiny heart!

The road was dusty with the black dust of fertile soil. The extraordinary luxuriance of the all-invading vegetation gave an impression of abundance, an impression as of a kind of fertilizing tempest. Vineyards alternating with fields of irises, orchards with olive groves, villages with houses surrounded with the dark foliage of laurels and spear-like cypresses flashed past the windows of the stage-coach. The postilion sounded his post-horn, a hook-nosed Capuchin monk, sunburnt the colour of his brown cassock, with grey, dusty hair, turned his gig, drawn by a little donkey, off the highway into a side road. Under the burning sun beggars, who seemed in strange contradiction to the prosperity of this countryside, lay sleeping in the dust alongside the road. Catholic priests in broad-brimmed hats looked like shepherds or bandits: horsemen in broad-brimmed hats with carbines slung across their shoulders, who turned off the road into the side tracks, looked in their turn like Catholic priests. In the fields, binding up the plants, working with hoe and spade were thin, scraggy Lombard labourers, who formed the principal part of the population of this very rich plain, which was divided up between the landed proprietors and the big farmers.

Beyle thought of the extraordinary cowed state of the population, the horrifying poverty side by side with opulence, the constant changes of authority in Northern Italy and the uncertainty of the morrow, by virtue of which the poor men and beggars of Lombardy might either turn into a mob of rebels and plunderers or march like an avenging visitation into the revolutionary towns at the call of the Catholic priests and Austrian gendarmes. Beyle thought of the great mistake his friends the Carbonari were making in not trying to find a way to link up with these people.

He recalled the oath of Byron and Confalonieri: "I will fight with all my strength for the true and just law of the cultivated fields, for without this law true liberty is inconceivable. The fields and the land cannot be private property. I pledge myself to fight for the abolition of private ownership." Beyle recalled that in pronouncing these words Byron had gazed at a ceremonial skull lying on the table and put out his hand to take from Confalonieri the symbol of the Carbonari—a branch of acacia blossom. This branch was only handed to those who, apart from all oaths, undertook to assist in extirpating all royal families.

Evening came on and with it the usual halt, and new lodgings. In the morning, at sunrise, they set out again. Towns, villages, villas, wayside inns flashed by. The weather was hot, sultry and exhausting. The sun scorched the mail-coach. Passengers were more and more reluctant to sit on top of the coach. The travellers inside the carriage changed with greater frequency. The old Jesuit had got off long ago near Fino and was met with great respect by an old lady with a dog. His place was taken by a dumpy little man, who opened a bundle of silk handkerchiefs and began to praise his wares. They were pink, grey and blue handkerchiefs with very tender verses embroidered in the corners; Petrarch's sonnets on the more expensive ones, or simple avowals of love, according to the tastes and means of the purchaser. The vendor reckoned above all to charm with his eloquence the young, smartly

dressed traveller sitting in the corner of the coach. But the latter showed complete indifference and seemed to be dozing while a gay young woman was trying to entertain him with her inane chatter. She, however, turned over the silk goods with curiosity and selected a dozen handkerchiefs with the most tender and moving inscriptions.

The young man woke up. His look of indifference gave place to something like an expression of horror when he saw that he was expected to pay. An affectionate scene then took place to the amusement of all the passengers. The young man resigned himself, took out a coloured leather Venetian wallet and paid up, adding to the selected handkerchiefs another one with a cross and papal emblems in the shape of keys in the corners.

"Now that is very praiseworthy. The young gentleman shows a mature taste in his choice," remarked an old man with big moustaches, who was sitting opposite.

"Do you think he is buying it for himself? It is for his uncle—a canon of Treviso. A year ago he would have bought me other presents than these, but now, when the thing is done, he hesitates over every lira. To punish him I shall use these handkerchiefs in a way he doesn't expect. They have such inscriptions on them!"

Whereupon she burst into ringing laughter.

The mail-coach entered the piazza of Saronno as she laughed. Her laughter mingled with the sound of the postillion's post-horn, to which the city trumpet of an Austrian herald seemed to reply. Round the turning by a pillar an executioner was beating with a whip that whistled in the air a naked man tied to the back of a donkey and fastened with cords in such a way that he was unable to move his arms. Around stood Austrian soldiers in white uniforms. The laughter died away on the young woman's lips. The coach drove quickly past the piazza, and the old man sitting in the corner said with a serious air:

"That's just what they need. These cursed Carbonari won't let a decent Italian live."

The only answer to this was complete silence on the part of all the passengers. Beyle frowned and did not utter a word all the way to Milan. The other passengers, however, after remaining silent for a while, started to talk about different subjects, and then timidly returned to the punishment they had just seen inflicted on the Italian. The old man who hated the Carbonari had the most to say. He said he had two sons, one of whom was an "honest Austrian officer," and the other a "good for-nothing, who slunk about the forests and hid from the Government."

"Evidently he is also a Carbonaro," added the old man. "My old hands won't reach him with the lash, but let the Austrian carabinieri get hold of him one fine day."

The young woman objected. She said that it was hard for a father to cast a son out of his heart for ever.

"He is no longer a son to me. He set against me my granddaughter, who said to me the other day: 'Papa says that Grandfather Cecchino wants to shut the sun up in prison if it won't stop shining.' Cecchino, that's me, I want to shut up the sun! He, my former son, dares to suggest such ideas to my daughter and my granddaughter! It would be too indulgent to tolerate the presence of that Carbonaro monster in my house."

The coachman, who was driving the coach along the soft road and could overhear this conversation, became so interested he bent his head towards the

glass pane and stared in the old man's face. He had exceptionally wide cheek-bones and a huge mouth and he smiled a smile that was not at all benevolent.

"I'm sure that lad is also a Carbonaro," said the old man, starting back with a look of unconcealed fear. "It's impossible to talk about anything on a journey. One simply doesn't know whom to beware of. There are ears everywhere, beginning with my own bedroom, and the struggle goes on everywhere."

The handkerchief dealer suddenly livened up; the pleasant flattering smile of the clever salesman faded from his face.

"Listen, signore," he said simply and earnestly. "You can't put all young Italians into gaol. Spielberg is not big enough for that."

"Well, there are also the vaults at Mantua. But after all there's no need to imprison all these rascals. It's the leaders who must be gaoled."

Pauline asked Beyle what Spielberg was.

"It's a most unamusing place: a moated castle somewhere in Moravia in a very remote wooded part. Apparently it is the most terrible of the Austrian prisons."

The handkerchief seller continued unabashed.

"You know, signore," he said, "I am not at all a Carbonaro and I don't like the smell of gunpowder, but I'll tell you the truth—the Austrians themselves are making Carbonari with the help of our priests. What can a man do at present without the permission of the authorities? Eat and drink, if you've got the money, and make merry without asking any questions, if you've got enough of the money, but in any case you must not learn, or read or travel or even talk as we are talking now. When a man is starving and looks for work he can't find any. He goes off into the forest, and they regard him as a bandit. I trade in silks, and my brother is engaged in buying up the crops of the peasants. He says there is a lot of unrest in the villages also. It's all right for you to treat your own son like that, but remember what General Manhès did when a priest wanted to take the Holy Sacrament to his spiritual son outside the town. Remember that quite recently the order was still in force forbidding people to go beyond the town boundary with food. That was when the relations of the fugitives in the forests supplied them with food. General Manhès ordered the priest to be shot, because a piece of bread had been found on him. They thought that in that way they would starve out all the Carbonari. But how can you do that! After such an order instead of one there will be five of them! Believe me, it's the Austrians and the priests who are making Carbonari."

They arrived in Milan at the hour of the siesta. All the shutters were closed. The streets, bathed in hot sunshine, were deserted. From the posting station of the mail-coach Beyle and Pauline drove in a cab to the Piazza Buonaparte. Everything was in its place. Sofia had kept the room tidy: there was not a particle of dust anywhere. She had received the letter in good time. A room had been set aside for Madame Pauline. There was a letter awaiting Beyle but the seal had been broken.

"Evidently in my absence my nephew unsealed your letter by mistake, Signor Beyle. Then a man with a big moustache and spectacles came and asked me to inform the passport department of your arrival."

a secret newspaper called *Tenda Rossa—Red Flag*. This fact alone shows that Byron's presence here is undesirable. I have two editions of his secret journal *Il Carbonaro*. Fortunately we have succeeded in arresting the compositor and breaking up the third edition before the first impression. I beg for Your Excellency's instructions.

INSPECTOR GENERAL SALVOTI.

An orderly knocked on the door and reported to Salvoti that a priest wished to see him. Into the room came a handsome young man with a frivolous, impudent expression. His cheeks were very red and he had a peculiarly sly smile. He made an impression of naïve shamelessness which did not harmonize at all with his black soutane and purple stockings.

"How do you do, Father Pavlovich," said Salvoti. "What sort of journey did you have this time from Vienna?"

"This time I'm going to stay here a long while," replied the priest. "The journey gets more and more difficult. Four miles from Como the coachman tipped me out at a turning, a couple of brigands attacked me and rummaged in my trunk, feeling every fold. They were peculiar brigands: they didn't take any money or things, they merely swore at me horribly."

"But everything turned out all right?"

"Yes, here is a breviary with a double binding for you. In it you will find the secret instructions and the order for my appointment."

"Bravo," said Salvoti. "But what salary are you to have? You know that we have no money whatever?"

"That's no concern of mine. You have been ordered to give me three thousand kronen for working expenses. Where you are going to get them is nothing to do with me."

"Listen, holy father. I'll give you the three thousand, but on condition that you set aside five hundred kronen every month for my share. Otherwise I shall write a report that you are unsuitable."

Pavlovich bared his teeth and laughed out loud.

"Write it, write it, my dear Salvoti. I'll see what sort of face you'll have in a month's time."

Salvoti picked up a knife, opened the leather back of the binding, took the buckram, cut it open and drew out the documents. As he read them he looked glum.

"Is it you who has been giving Sedlnitzky a wrong impression?" said Salvoti in a fury. "In Vienna they evidently think that the work here is easy."

"Evidently they don't think so in Vienna, if they've sent a clever fellow like me to assist you."

"There won't be anything for you to do here. There are plenty like you here."

"There are few like me anywhere, and if in a year's time I don't become the King's chaplain and the divine conscience of all the misguided people imprisoned in Spielberg, then I assure you, my dear new chief, that you yourself will occupy the place of honour in the first cell in that beautiful castle."

"Is this insolence your idea of establishing correct relations in our work, may I ask?"

"Well, we'll have a chat about that this evening. I invite you to my cell in the Certosa of Pavia. The prettiest girls of Milan will be there and we'll spend a merry evening."

Salvoti hesitated for a moment. Then he held out his hand to Pavlovich and said: "I'll come."

A secretary tapped on the door and came in with the mail. On top of the pile lay a letter, which read as follows:

We know all about your activities. Remember, cursed hirelings and traitors, that every step you take is known to the Italian people. Our answer to your espionage based on treachery and the betrayal of our associates for money will be a conspiracy of the whole people and a secret service which will make every step you take clear to us. We have the hearts and thoughts of oppressed Italy with us. You have Austrian kronen and bribery.

"We get letters like that every day," said Salvoti. "And all in different handwriting. One fine day we'll have to clear out."

"Well then, we'll go away for a little while while these fools are in command. But what does it matter who is in authority, so long as they pay well? There is always an open path for priests. Still, I admit your position is an unpleasant one. You are an Italian and a layman. They may simply string you up on a lamp-post."

The conversation went on in this strain for some time. Then they both drove to the magistracy.

Next morning Cechina, a servant in the house of Métilde Viscontini, confessed with horror her frivolous conduct to her mistress and said that the young priest, with whom she had spent the evening, had given her wine to drink and kept asking her who were the people who came to the Marchesina Viscontini's house.

"I didn't even know, Signora, that your maiden name was Viscontini. I told the priest that your name was Dembowski and that your husband was an officer of the French army and had now gone back to Poland. But the priest knows a good deal, and it seems I got drunk and said more than I ought. But he asked about Signor Foscolo whom I don't know at all. He said he was a red-haired Carbonaro who had fled to England."

Métilde Viscontini did not betray her emotion in any way. Having quickly set Cechina's fears at rest, she sent her away and waited for her new friend, whose acquaintance she had recently made at the house of Count Porro. He was a Frenchman from Buonaparte's army who had become a citizen of Milan—Signor Arrigo Beyle.

As Signor Arrigo Beyle went to the Piazza Belgiojoso, where lived the unknown woman he had now met twice and by whom he was now received, he experienced a bashfulness he had never known before; he laughed inwardly and said to himself that there was no need for him at his age to be afraid of bashfulness. He caught himself thinking that his almost youthful fascination for this woman was united in his heart with a sentiment of infinite respect; an almost complete adoration. She delighted him with her incredible vitality, the liveliness of her mind, the freshness of her sentiments and that amazing nervous control, which revealed itself in every muscle, in every movement, in every glance of that magnificent Milanese beauty. After two months' acquaintance, when she permitted him to come every day for a quarter of an hour to her box at the Scala, where she would be with her cousin, Countess Traversi,

Beyle was at last received in her drawing-room in the Piazza Belgiojoso. He was an intelligent, interesting conversationalist, neither boring nor affected, always exceedingly gay and at the same time discreet. But the moment came when this discretion became more and more burdensome. Apart from a simple interest and a certain amount of confidence, he could not be certain of anything on her side. At the same time he felt more and more tormented. He was thirty. She was twenty-eight. She had been married and had two children. That rash scatterbrain Dembowski had done everything to make her life a misery, and at last they had parted. She had had a stormy passion for the revolutionary Ugo Foscolo and had almost been ruined by him. Beyle could never make up his mind to speak to Signora Métilde about the man. He could only remind her of their meeting on the banks of the River Adda the day when she crossed on the ferry and he had supported her in the lurching carriage. He did not dare remind her of the meeting on the shores of Como during her farewell journey with Foscolo. He knew that her maid took to the post letters to England addressed to a London merchant named Fletcher, and he was tortured with frantic jealousy at the thought that this Fletcher might be Foscolo.

The day Cechina made her strange confession, Métilde was waiting for Beyle with a certain amount of impatience. Cechina's confession particularly stirred her indignation because she held the Austrian police in the greatest contempt. After thinking the matter over, she opened her secretaire and wrote a letter to Baron Binder, the head of the Milan police. She firmly demanded that the unknown priest's revolting intrigue should cease. She laughed as she tried to imagine the expression on Binder's face as he read the letter. She wrote that she was exceedingly sorry that the clergy of Milan were spending their time in the company of girls of the lowest class, that the priest was setting a maid against her mistress, that it was precisely by these interrogations that police agents disguised as priests sowed distrust of the aristocracy in the heads of servants, and that she demanded the discovery and punishment of this rascal. Then she crossed out the word "rascal," thought it over and wrote again "your rascal."

She had not yet finished the letter, when Ludovico, the manservant, announced the arrival of Signor Beyle. She was so anxious to finish the letter, that she asked him to wait.

Ludovico went out, delivered the message to Beyle, and Beyle began to walk impatiently up and down the soft carpet of the big drawing-room.

On the right of the fireplace hung a large painting of the Lombard school—"Herodias," ascribed to the brush of Bernardino Luini. The ill-fated young pupil of Leonardo da Vinci portrayed a woman with her head slightly inclined to the right. She gazes with half-closed eyes, a smile, full of charm, full of significance but without guile, seductive yet not sweet, mysterious and unintelligible, playing on her delicate, prettily-moulded lips. The oval of the face is slightly elongated by the soft chin. The brow is extraordinarily pure, lofty and framed with dark gold hair. Every trait is full of refined vitality, every vein is alive with warm, palpitating blood. At the same time it is all shrouded by a delicate, barely perceptible sadness.

"But for the sadness, Bernardino Luini's picture would be a subtle portrait of Signora Métilde," thought Beyle, standing by the fireplace and touching a blue porcelain vase with his hand.

The door opened and without letting go of the handle, Signora Métilde looked into the drawing-room. A sophisticated smile of welcome hovered on

her face. She wanted to say something amusing, but glancing round the room and not finding Beyle, she suddenly became strangely sad, almost frightened.

It was only for a second: Beyle came from the fireplace and walked towards the lady of the house. Signora Métilde's appearance changed in a moment. She looked at Beyle with dry, angry eyes, as though fearing lest her sudden fright at the thought that he had gone away without waiting might give him some advantage. But he was already triumphant. This was for him a new, absolutely unexpected proof of real interest. Like every man overwhelmed by a powerful emotion he over-estimated himself and mistrusted himself all the time. His foppish treatment of others, which was due to his peculiar estrangement from and solitude in a society which failed to understand his aesthetic jokes, his sceptical remarks about Buonaparte, his cold observations on the intelligence and efficiency of Baron Binder, and his sceptical attitude towards the liberal circles of Milanese society made Beyle more and more isolated and obliged him more and more often to wear a mask. Coldly he carried out Confalonieri's requests and treated the Italian national idea with indifference, yet he hated the clergy and the Austrian gendarmes. At the same time he himself failed to notice his isolation, lost in the increasing fascination which the charm of Métilde Viscontini was exercising over him.

He was shrewd enough not to reveal by a single gesture that he had observed Métilde's bewilderment at the thought that he had not waited and had gone away. She told him what she had written to Baron Binder and asked him whether she ought to add anything. He read the letter and suggested adding a few words to the effect that the tactlessness of the Austrian police would oblige the Marchesina to deprive herself of the services of a good maid and have recourse to the protection of His Majesty. Métilde added the postscript. Then she called Ludovico and told him to take a cab and deliver the letter to the rational and ruthless Baron.

## CHAPTER TWENTY-THREE

RETURNING HOME LATE IN THE EVENING, BEYLE WAS SURPRISED TO FIND THE door open. Sofia was not in. He went down to the inner yard and tapped on Francesco's window, as all the bells turned out to be broken. Nobody replied. He pushed the door with his foot and caught sight of Francesco dead drunk. All his efforts to bring him to his senses were unsuccessful. Francesco merely grunted and rolled over from one side to the other.

Beyle thought the house had been robbed. But everything was intact. The writing desk had been opened, and a sheaf of poems by Rossetti and Berchet had disappeared. These two Italian lovers of liberty had given him their manuscripts, verses which were circulated in copies throughout Italy and sung in the towns. Beyle could not go to sleep immediately, filled as he was with intolerable disgust. He paced up and down the room a long time, then went out into the street and walked to Maroncelli's house.

Having wakened the poet, he told him what had happened and asked for his advice. Maroncelli waved his hands and said that in such cases it was difficult to foresee anything.

"The police are not likely to gain much by getting a fresh list of Rossetti's poems. I think that any Spanish legate or any Cardinal has a collection of such works."



Then Maroncelli began to talk about Byron. He had seen him recently in Venice, near the Ca d'Oro Palace. Byron had climbed out of an upper window, hung on the marble coping with his left hand, and dropped into the canal.

"Everybody gave him up for lost," said Maroncelli, "and only a gondolier standing nearby reassured us: 'That Englishman is a fish: he can't drown.' A couple of hours later Buratti saw Byron swimming towards the Lido island, and later on the swimmer was walking along the shore without bothering to undress, letting his clothes dry in the sun."

"How do you account for such behaviour?" asked Beyle.

"It is characteristic of Byron to take risks without any purpose. I don't think he was under any necessity to leap into the water."

"I think," said Beyle, "that Byron is more of an Italian than an Englishman, and his love for risk and daring corresponds to those qualities of the Italians which Alfieri writes about. It is not for nothing that Byron loves his words: 'The human plant is born incomparably stronger in Italy than anywhere else on the earth, and the ferocious crimes committed in Italy merely confirm this truth.' Byron resembles your old *condottieri* and many of your contemporaries. I am profoundly convinced that the Italian, whatever his origin, possesses the finest qualities of the human race. That is why Byron has stayed so long in Italy. The air of Rome makes a romantic of him. The classic tastes of the people of yesterday momentarily cast the shadow of melancholy on his face. See how classic England has arrayed itself against Byron. A shameful article in the *Anti-Jacobin* suggests that the poet should be drawn and quartered. as he is 'more dangerous than Robespierre.' And the *Edinburgh Review*, in a venomous article written anonymously by the all-powerful Minister Brougham, permits shameful attacks on Byron and indulges in vulgar abuse. As a defender of romanticism I shall return to England some day to stop up that evil-smelling hole of English conservatism."

"Yes, you are quite right. Only bear in mind that Byron has compromised himself so much in the eyes of Europe that he can no longer show himself in the north. They still show him some deference, so long as the royal warrant has not been issued. Ugo Foscolo recently wrote to Silvio Pellico, to whom he confided his library and manuscripts, that a pamphlet of George IV on the English poet peer was known in London. It will fare badly with Byron after this. As for his connection with Italy, you are entirely right there. I have seen how the comrades who came from the south, simple men, were very friendly towards him and how Byron received them, quite forgetting that he was a celebrated poet and, strangest of all, forgetting that he was an English lord."

"That must have been an incredible occasion!" said Beyle ironically.

Maroncelli gave him a disapproving look and said brusquely: "I must tell you twelve of your comrades have been discussing the fact that of late you have not kept them informed of your work. They said straight out that you were a Carbonaro in your own eyes, but for them you were an inquisitive traveller and nothing more."

Beyle blushed and turned aside.

"You often go to see M<sup>lle</sup> Viscontini, but you must know that she is an atheist, like her friend Foscolo. That's no good to us. Italy is a religious country. We cannot take away the people's faith, while they are unhappy."

"No, but as long as the internal and external yoke of religion exists, the people will not be happy. Nobody knows what makes happiness. I have

never pretended to be a fanatic of the liberal party and now less than ever can I be a fanatic of any convictions."

"Nevertheless, to put a stop to chatter you ought to go to Naples and get information about the events in Madrid. Everything should be verified, as the stories that are being told about Ferdinand VII are fantastic. He has surrounded himself with a *camarilla*. The water-carrier Colado, the usurer and speculator Ugarte, a pair of thieving canons, Ostolaza and Escoiquiz, the papal nuncio—the well-known thief Gravine—and finally the greatest rogue in the world—the Russian ambassador Tatistchev actually rule the Pyrenean peninsula. The population is terrorized to the limit; the Ministers are changed every week; this year the longest period of ministerial authority has been twenty-seven days. The Minister Macañez was arrested in his own house by the King, and even the Minister of Police Echevarri did not escape being sent to prison. After a merry banquet with the King at the palace, he returned home and found an order for his arrest. He had to go himself into a cell, and the governor of the prison refused to lock him up. It's like a madhouse! The vice-governors of the towns of Spain were given orders to shoot the captains-general and to occupy their posts themselves. And when every one of them refused to do this, the King declared that the order was spurious and that the royal signature had been forged. Investigations were made. They led to the discovery of the scribe who prepared the order. For the sake of appearances the King pretended to order him to be hanged, but actually gave him four thousand ducats and made sure that he got away. The most abominable things are being done by Tatistchev. The *camarilla* intended to strengthen the Spanish navy with Russian ships. There were none to be had any nearer Spain. Of the ten ships purchased in Russia only one turned out to be seaworthy; eight sank on the voyage. Tatistchev got rich and Ferdinand likewise took his share of the money. A king, who robs his country and is afraid of his ministers, is not that a remarkable spectacle? We have our brothers among the troops in Spain. The officer, Rafaele Riego, is coming to Naples. You must see him. The sole task is to establish simultaneous action: in the Pyrenees against Ferdinand, in the Apennines against Austria. You understand that it is only in these conditions that the international police, the 'Holy Alliance,' sitting in Vienna with Metternich and Alexander I at its head, will be unable to swoop down on the revolution we are preparing. Otherwise the Bourbon and Hapsburg packs of hounds will track us down one by one. But you realize that the royal nests in Europe are turning into nests of wasps, which fly out and sting the peoples who refuse to feed them. You notice that their menials have run away, and that their large families have less and less security. Even such aristocrats as Byron have swung over to the side of the revolution. Our cause is assured. Undoubted success awaits us."

"But for what you said in the beginning, all the rest would have been excellent," said Beyle. "There are two things I can't understand: firstly, your tendency to see in me a full-blown Carbonaro—I assure you that I have never been that; and secondly—this I consider to be fundamental—your defence of religion. Religion is not only unnecessary, but it is dangerous and harmful to humanity. Silvio talks with enthusiasm about Carbonari priests. I am profoundly convinced that a Carbonaro priest is far more dangerous to humanity than a Catholic royalist. A decent priest, an honest priest, is a thousand times worse than a corrupt monk, a bribe-taking monk, a monk who is a king's confessor. I am afraid that when the time for decisive action comes

there will be revealed in your milieu a crack which will cause a collapse of the Carbonaro movement. In a few years' time the French Convention of 1793 will seem to have been a centre of real heroism. It prevented the foreign troops from coming and setting up their camp on the heights of Montmartre. You know what the Jacobin Convention was. I was a child when the defence of the Republic began. I should like to see the efficiency of the Jacobins in the work of the Supreme Venta. But for the present allow me to remain a devoted sceptic, an observer of the human heart. I shall go to Naples quite apart from your exhortation. I hope you will soon put on the cassock."

And without saying good-bye, Beyle left Maroncelli's house.

After Beyle's departure Maroncelli wrote a brief note to Confalonieri informing him that "the statue of Alceste will apparently be placed in the Neapolitan museum on the day of the Carnival, which begins on 12th January."

*Alceste* was the name for Beyle.

On leaving Maroncelli's house Beyle encountered Colonel Scotti and in reply to his invitation to take a morning bath on the Corso, he said he was leaving for Naples to enjoy himself at the Carnival.

As he approached his house, he saw a bored-looking man standing at the entrance. The stranger glanced at Beyle, yawned, took out his watch and went hurriedly round the corner.

"All this forebodes no good," thought Beyle.

Going up to his room, he found none other than his old acquaintance, Olivieri, waiting for him.

"It seems I never needed you so badly as at present," said Beyle, and suddenly stopped. "But where have you come from, and what are you doing?"

"I have a tobacconist's shop in Florence. I'm here on business. I heard quite by chance from a woman friend that you were in Milan. After that it wasn't difficult to find you."

"Yes, but how did you manage to survive after the plundering of Vilna?"

"I abandoned the café and fled with Rinadelli as soon as the news of the Emperor's abdication arrived."

"And what are you doing here? Oh yes, you've got a tobacconist's shop in Florence. Well then, I ask you frankly: what is the attitude of the Austrian police towards you?"

"If the Signore wants a passport, I can get it."

"I see you haven't changed."

"Oh, no, Signore, you are wrong there. I have been through four academies and twelve universities. I am now the most educated man in the whole Lombardo-Venetian province."

"Well, and how is trade?"

"You know, Signore, I'm a good businessman in general. Six days in the week I sell at a loss, but on Sundays, when I don't sell anything, I am rich."

Beyle looked at him sullenly. The conversation had become too frank and had reached a point from which both of them wished to turn back. But it was too late. Beyle assumed a vague expression and gazed out of the window, and Olivieri had a demoniacal smile as he looked at Beyle. There was an awkward silence. At last Olivieri, who was more resolute than his companion, decided to cut the knot.

"Well, tell me, Signore, is there anything in which your old servant could be of use to you? I can easily renew my acquaintance with the pretty maids of the principal beauties of Milan. But if the Signore's heart is pining for

something else, just tell me what it is. At present a good many Frenchmen have only one mistress—Signora Passportina. She is much more expensive, but she can be procured."

Beyle mastered himself and said: "For the present I need neither the one nor the other. But Francesco, my manservant, has become an inveterate drunkard. Yesterday thieves broke into my rooms and when I returned I couldn't wake him. I must get somebody else in his place."

"Well, I am at your service, Signor."

"You yourself? But what about your shop?"

"Apparently I'm going to get a licence to trade in Milan."

"Is that so! But how will you trade if you enter my service?"

"I'll take a partner."

"Good! Try and arrange it by December, as I want to spend January in Naples."

"I don't advise you to do that, Signore. You've no need to go to Naples. You can enjoy yourself much better at the Carnival in Bologna. Take my good advice—go there as soon as possible."

Beyle's head was in a whirl. Having arranged with Olivieri that the latter should come back in a week's time, he lay down and went to sleep. A couple of hours' sleep refreshed him. He went to the post and received a letter from Paris. A certain *Maisonnette* wrote him a long dissertation on French politics, accompanying his arguments with caustic attacks on a certain Stendhal, from whom he, *Maisonnette*, was receiving letters describing the authorities of Milan and the political conditions in Italy. Beyle was particularly pleased by the lines in which *Maisonnette* made fun of Stendhal's "ducomania," his partiality for titles and his misuse of them in designating his acquaintances. "Lingay has remained true to himself," thought Beyle, "although he now signs himself as *Maisonnette*." The letter concluded with the statement that "His Majesty vainly considers himself to be sitting on the throne of his forefathers, but he is sitting on the throne of Buonaparte, and if Napoleon returns to the Tuileries, the only thing he will need to take with him is his own nightcap. All the other nonsense of the monarchy has remained untouched." "That is an incautious phrase," thought Beyle and began to read the second letter.

It was from Grenoble. His father refused to send him any money except the interest from his maternal heritage. This meant that his financial affairs took a sudden unfavourable turn. His Commissariat pension was infinitesimal. True, the book of Baron Stendhal brought an unexpected aid, the *Life of Haydn*, of Monsieur Bombet, likewise in the second edition brought in some revenue, but Monsieur M.B.A.A. refused to pay anything for the *History of Painting in Italy*. Of the three writers maintaining the Milanese citizen Beyle not one had so far insured him a literary livelihood.

A month later, in Bologna, going to balls and masquerades and enjoying himself as much as he could, Beyle found out through his new companion and servant Olivieri the value of Bologna estates, the price of corn and wine; feverishly he inquired about the rate of interest on his capital, and Olivieri, like a wise Figaro, tried his utmost to improve the shaken financial affairs of Baron Stendhal who had become Count Almaviva in exile.

In the end the French businessman and the Corsican adventurer provoked the ridicule of the connoisseurs of Italian double-entry book-keeping, the birth-place of which was Bologna. Moreover, Beyle himself was tired of the money fever. He reflected that his practical affairs had not been successful

and he had become indifferent to a number of every-day practical interests merely because he was constantly possessed by the tormenting desire to be in the same town, the same house and the same room with the most fascinating creature he had ever known on earth—with Métilde Viscontini. At the green table in a gambling house in Bologna where some thirty men were gathered to play *faro*, Colonel Scotti mentioned her name. And the cards flew out of Beyle's hands on to the carpet. He was surprised at such sensibility. There were moments when he had spasms in the throat; at times when the subject of the conversation was as remote as possible from his obsession, he would get up, go over to the window, utter some insignificant words, needing a great effort of the will to suppress the sudden upsurge of emotion.

The frivolity, rudeness and cynical levity which for years he had cultivated as a protection, as a shell to shield him from the cruelties of reality—all this had suddenly disappeared, had ceased to shield him, had become unnecessary. And as in the first days after his return to Paris from Russia, he felt himself washed by the waves of a new, unprecedented existence.

His departure for Naples was already settled. The easy manner, or as the Italians called it, the *disinvoltura* of Bologna society captivated Beyle so much that he prepared to leave it only with the utmost reluctance. Just before setting out, he went by chance to the post office, more by the force of a sudden impulse than out of necessity. To his surprise the postmaster handed him, through the little window, a bunch of letters. They were letters from relations and acquaintances informing him of the death of old Chérubin and had been lying there waiting for him a long time.

He went out of the post office, feeling neither sorrow nor regret. His father had loved nobody and had done everything to destroy the filial sentiments of his son. He would have to go to Grenoble, as Pauline demanded.

His other sister, Zénaïde, had also written him a few lines, the first time in many years. She was a disgusting hypocrite, the very spit of Aunt Séraphie. She urged him not to come, saying that nobody would do Pauline any harm even without him. It was precisely for that reason that he must go. But what about Naples? He would explain the situation to a Carbonaro friend. . . . Olivieri could go to Naples alone. "He'll do everything quicker than me," thought Beyle. "I was never suited for serious work of that nature."

On arriving at the room in the hotel, Beyle found Olivieri ready to depart and gave him his instructions.

Left alone, Beyle made inquiries and found out that the northern mail was leaving the next day.

In the evening the violinist Paganini was giving a concert in Bologna. It was impossible to miss such an opportunity. Only the most expensive tickets remained. Beyle sat in the second row waiting for the concert to begin. Enormous chandeliers illuminated the noisy hall. A rapturous throng of gaily-dressed people buzzed and talked and laughed, as though they had forgotten all about the concert. But everything quietened down, when a small man with a huge mane of hair, a white face, enormous eyes and an unpleasant, almost ape-like jaw appeared on the platform. This was Paganini. A whisper of amazement ran through the hall at the sight of his attire. He was dressed in the uniform of an officer of the suite of Princess Lastitia Buonaparte. Golden bees were embroidered on his collar and sleeve-cuffs. A white gauze neck-cloth, neatly tied at the throat, bulged slightly in the opening of his huge up-standing collar-band. Somebody shouted from the upper gallery: "Down

with the lackey's livery!" Paganini calmly raised his eyes and lifted his bow, but catching it against the stand, knocked down the music score. After that, without seeming embarrassed he abruptly turned his back to the accompanist, drew the bow across the strings and began to play without looking at the score.

He played Tartini's "Devil's Trill." All the hell and all the paradise living in the soul of this man were expressed in the mad sweet music. His dark eyes like molten metal poured out torrents of fire into the hall, that held its breath, and sheaves of sounds, pure, foaming like spray, burning like sparks, held the silent throng absolutely spellbound. Without giving anybody a chance to recover, the violinist passed immediately to his "Capriccio," striking the imagination of his audience and exciting it with the wonders of his fantastic music. At times it seemed as though the hall were filled with violinists—four, five, dozens of violins sounded everywhere, and all of a sudden the musical sounds were interrupted by plaintive pizzicatos. Then all this gave place to a cantilena—a smooth, calm, flowing, infinitely broad river of sound. Suddenly there was a staccato: the bow described an arc in the air high above the violinist's head, like a sword in the hand of an army commander, and the delicate old Guarneri violin hung on the musician's left arm.

Paganini replied with a nod of his head to the frenzied cries, clapping and yells of the delighted crowd and left the platform.

The concert went on till late in the night.

Going out into the piazza, Beyle heard the name Viscontini mentioned in conversation. Whether the speakers referred to Métilde or not he did not know. But he felt a terrible desire to see her as quickly as possible. In the morning he thought only of hastening the departure of the diligence. And as he drove out of Bologna, he did not think about France at all, but all the way he pictured himself mounting the staircase in the Piazza Belgiojoso. As a form of protection from the torment of his emotions, he began to make notes of his observations on himself. He felt quite ill and tried to give an accurate description of his symptoms. He wrote down the heading: "I strive to render an account to myself of that passion, of which all the sincere manifestations bear the stamp of beauty."

He took himself and his state as a living reality that needed to be explained, as a doctor who considers his own complaint inevitable, as a savant who has found a manuscript on the deciphering of which he will have to take great pains. This capacity to look at himself from outside diminished the pain he felt. He observed with the utmost curiosity how hope and doubt alternated in him.

He still did not know how Métilde felt towards him.

The greater the confidence she showed to him, the less he felt himself able to tell her how dear to him she had become. At the very moment when the conversation was most unconstrained, he would suddenly feel embarrassed and have to invent all sorts of pretexts in order to leave Métilde's drawing-room.

Boldness possessed him only when any of his acquaintances went up to Métilde and remained in conversation with her for a long time or when the Marchesa Traversi, whom he disliked, did everything to interrupt his conversation with Métilde. Every time, whenever he received permission to accompany Métilde from the theatre, he would stop outside the Palazzo Traversi and refuse to go in with her. And as he made no secret of his sentiments towards the Marchesa Traversi, so his own sentiments towards Métilde gradually revealed themselves. Perhaps the circumstance that the Traversi family had given

money for the publication of *The Last Letters of Jacopo Ortis* and to the author Ugo Foscolo himself and helped him to return to Italy periodically, had an influence on Beyle's frame of mind. In any case a vague, unrecognized jealousy of Foscolo was evident in this unaccountable feeling. When Métilde talked about a young madcap from Buonaparte's army, about this hero with a poetic mane of fiery hair above his white brow, without mentioning the young man's name or looking at Beyle, Beyle felt as though he were on a red-hot grill in the torture-chambers of the Inquisition. But Métilde was quite unconcerned as she said this: so remote was the idea that Beyle might be suffering that she did not even notice his burning gaze from the corner of the room, where he was sitting bewildered and huddled up like a wet bird, looking at her in silence.

Several notes in Métilde's handwriting inviting him to take part in a country excursion were sewn up in his waistcoat. He never parted with these precious letters. And now, in the mail-coach, he felt them with his fingers under the silk as a proof that he was alive, and not asleep and dreaming that he was going to Milan.

"Vain people," he wrote, "even when they are intelligent, are quite wrong when they assert that they have always been above the weaknesses of the heart. Serious persons, who enjoy in the world the reputation of being men of good sense and by no means romantic, are far more likely to understand the most unrestrained novel than a book in which the author has tried to describe coldly the various phases of the spiritual disease known as love.

"But the whole point is that there is nobody free from this disease, there are no directions as to how to get rid of the disease, there is no other remedy than to suffer it to the end."

These reflections lightened the journey to Milan for him. At times the image of Métilde, her eyes, her voice rose up before him so like-life that he felt giddy. A moment later in order not to jump up from pain he made an effort to describe his state of mind. The jolting of the mail-coach, the swaying of the springs and the light snoring of his neighbour hindered him from writing with the lead pencil on the paper. But the greater the difficulty, the better. He covered with writing all the theatre bills and concert programmes he had at hand. At the stopping-places he had no desire to write over a cup of coffee. At Parma, in transferring to another diligence, he had a couple of hours free. The Farnese Tower, the quiet streets of the peaceful and beautiful city, which had become the place of refuge of Marie-Louise, the daughter of the Emperor Franz and the wife of exiled Napoleon—all this afforded him a momentary oblivion and distracted him from the impatient ardour which made him look at his watch at every stopping-place.

An old Carbonaro canon with a Voltairian cast of mind, gay and witty, was his companion in the streets of Parma. The old man told him the history of the dukedom as they walked along the Viale Mentana. He called Parma with its narrow horizon "the Charterhouse of Parma" ("*la Certosa di Parma*"). Beyle liked the name very much, but again, as he listened to the canon's stories, inhaling the smell of the Mentana violets and admiring the way everything took on a golden tinge in the air permeated with the pollen of the flowering irises, his mind went back to Métilde and imagined her as the ruler of this little city. It seemed to him that this city might be the setting for a beautiful story about Métilde and the Baron Stendhal. He pictured to himself the outlines of a historical chronicle, in which Métilde figured as the heroine under the

name of the Duchess of Sanseverina and where he himself was Minister of the Duchy of Parma under the name of . . . well, even under the name of Count Mosca, in memory of his *Moscow* campaign.

When the creative imagination of an artist of strong character is at work, his personal emotions are transformed into the material of his art, and thereby lose a considerable part of their poignancy. Such a moment of relief from the overwhelming influx of emotions of an unrequited passion was experienced by Beyle during the walk through the streets of Parma with his old friend.

Halting on the river bank near San Gervasio, the canon at Beyle's request looked to see what time it was. It was two o'clock in the afternoon. The mail-coach was leaving in an hour's time. Hearing the English Breguet watch strike in the canon's hands, Beyle was surprised at the shape of it. He had seen one exactly like it, kept as a novelty, on the writing-desk of Mélite Viscontini the last time he was at her house. The watch was undoubtedly from England. "Who else has Mélite got in England besides Foscolo? Nobody!" Almost staggering with acute pain, he took leave of the canon with a haste which bordered on incivility. He felt the earth to be collapsing under his feet. Taking off his top-hat, he passed his hand over his hair absentmindedly and lost his way several times. In this condition he arrived in Milan.

In the Piazza Belgiojoso he mastered himself, but still seemed to be in a dream. He did not immediately believe his ears, when Ludovico, without announcing him, told him that he was expected. Entering the drawing room he saw Mélite in the company of a score of people engaged in animated conversation; they welcomed him joyfully. Mélite, smiling, held out her hand as she sat in a silk-covered armchair. She was wearing a bright dress with enormous flowers and looked like a girl of eighteen. She was so enchanting and so gracious that Beyle could hardly restrain his excitement at meeting her after his state of mind on the journey. He became riotously gay, but it was much easier for him to suppress gaiety than sorrow. He became a witty, gay companion and before a quarter of an hour passed, he had already gained the attention of the small salon. Mélite had known that he was arriving: in the morning she had sent Ludovico to him with an invitation to spend the evening at her house, where she and her friends were to entertain Count Porro who was going abroad. The Count's two children were to be left in the charge of Silvio Pellico.

"What is the reason for the sudden departure of Count Porro?" asked Beyle without addressing anybody in particular.

"It is not sudden, but I have to see some friends in Switzerland to settle my affairs," replied the Count evasively. "I hope that you, Signor Beyle, will become a contributor to the journal which Confalonieri is publishing; the secretary is Silvio and the collaborators are your friends, who are working for the cause of the liberation of Italy."

"I won't hide from you the fact that under the pseudonym of 'Alceste' I have long been writing in our *Conciliatore*. I have just come from Bologna, where there is not a man whose heart would not respond to the articles of that journal."

"So much the better, so much the better," replied Porro. "When you have any difficulties, apply to Romagnesi, he is a very well-informed fellow. He can always give you sensible advice."

In the middle of the conversation Borsieri came in and interrupting everybody, began to relate what had happened to him.



He was walking in the garden when all of a sudden a man scrambled over the wall and fell into a flower bed.

"I ran up to him," continued Borsieri, "thinking that he was crushed to death. But he had only slightly damaged the rose bushes and scratched his cheek. He implored me to save him. I thought he was a Carbonaro. But he did not respond to a single sign. So I got the impression that he was a madman. A few hours ago he told me, gasping for breath and interrupting himself, that he was the Duke of Normandy, the author of the verses you know about . . ."

"The Duke of Normandy!" exclaimed everybody, horrified. "Borsieri, you'll come to a bad end. Do you know what sort of person that is? You remember the two pamphlets concerning Louis XVIII? The Duke of Normandy is the escaped son of the executed King of France. Some said he died in prison; others told about his correspondence with the Tsar of Russia, who, passing over the legitimate Dauphin and raising to the throne his uncle, the brother of Louis XVI, called the King Louis XVIII. The Duke of Normandy is Louis XVII, who never reigned."

"That's all nonsense," said Confalonieri. "I was in Paris when some impostor created the first version of that legend. I suppose he was a dangerous *provocateur* planted on Borsieri by the police. You must go to the prefecture and give it back its own child."

Borsieri flared up with indignation.

"What, do you want me to betray a man who has found refuge in my house? On the contrary, I want to ask Count Porro to make it possible for the fugitive to escape abroad by giving him the passport of one of his servants."

"On no account!" snapped Porro.

"In that case I'll ask my dear friend Arrigo to hide him at least for one night."

"You don't know me very well, if you think my back is broad enough to shield such a bright sun as the King of France. I would sooner proclaim myself Emperor of New York than consent to give shelter to this 'King of France.'"

"But understand my position: two free and easy young men, whistling and spitting, walk up and down under my windows the whole day long. How can I get away from this devilry?"

"And you must understand my position. My father has died. I'm going to France not later than to-morrow. I have stopped in Milan merely to say good-bye to my friends," said Beyle.

All began to discuss Borsieri's position with animation.

During the conversation Mélite Viscontini rose and going to the other end of the room, said to Beyle: "Accept my condolences, my friend. And come back as quickly as you can."

The whole world seemed to fill with music. Everything began to sing and speak in Beyle's heart. This was the best moment of the evening. He decided to go away immediately, fearing to lose the precious pearl of sudden happiness.

In the vestibule just as he was going out on to the stairs, he heard Mélite's voice in the drawing-room: "Beyle is an amiable and intelligent conversationalist. Why is he so different when one is alone with him?"

The heavy drops of rain outside were in complete harmony with the emotions Beyle had experienced to effect such a sudden change of mood. What Mélite

had said to him had given him some hope, but what he overheard in the vestibule brought him back from heaven to earth.

While the northern mail-coach was carrying Beyle away in the company of some rather boring travellers, Salvoti, the senior procurator and chief of the secret police, was sitting with a young Frenchman at the head office.

The young Frenchman sitting before him was telling him about his unsuccessful attempt to disguise himself in the martyr's clothes of the Duke of Normandy.

"Just imagine, *monsieur le procureur*," he said to Salvoti, "that blockhead Borsieri, whose heart melts at any pretty couplet; he flapped his ears when I told him my story and forgetting all about his Carbonari friends, just like a donkey he requested the Frenchman Beyle to help his compatriot, the heir to the throne, Prince Louis XVII, who failed to become King of France. That astute Jacobin sized him up immediately. It is difficult for the French to believe in Louis XVII. Three princes have already claimed that name. I think the Italians, too, will not want to have any dealings with the Duke of Normandy. Aren't there too many out-of-work dukes in Italy already?"

"Gently, my friend, gently. You're not asked about politics. Receive half of what you have been promised in the event of success, and take this note to Romagnesi."

The note was anonymous. Romagnesi, a Carbonaro, was the nephew of the Austrian procurator and secret Jesuit—Salvoti. He hated his uncle. The uncle, divining his nephew's connection with the Carbonaro movement, was seeking for ways to get possession of his secrets. Wrapping young Romagnesi in a thick and sticky layer of dirty intrigue, he observed how the young man melted month by month, losing his strength in a struggle with invisible foes.

This time the note addressed to him ran as follows: "Your best friend, the Milanese Arrigo Beyle, left to-day by the northern mail-coach for France in order to inform the French police of the names of all those who are plotting the overthrow of Louis XVIII. Be on your guard in the name of the liberty of Italy."

The note made no impression when Romagnesi showed it to his friends, nevertheless he was greatly distressed. Salvoti was triumphant, realizing that this apparently harmless but too outspoken Frenchman who lived in Milan either would not return at all or, if he did, would find the doors of the Milanese houses closed to him.

## CHAPTER TWENTY-FOUR

THIS INDEED WAS WHAT HAPPENED. ON RETURNING FROM GRENOBLE, HENRI Beyle noticed with a perplexity that gave place to alarm, that many of his Italian friends crossed to the other side of the street with a bewildered look as soon as they caught sight of him on the pavement. Brief and abrupt replies, bewildered and diverted eyes. Only Métilde received him pleasantly and in a friendly, confiding manner. He told her what had worried him on his arrival, and she alone caught his meaning at once.

A month later Romagnesi shot himself in the head.

After this many renewed their confidence in Beyle.

Métilde sent for him and had a long talk with him. She had had a conversation, on her own initiative, with Signor Federigo Confalonieri. She told Beyle in a simple, friendly way the frank opinion of the leader of the Lombard

Carbonari concerning him. Federigo said: "I regard Beyle as the only Frenchman who has devoted himself to the cause of Italian freedom. It is not his fault that when the French devote themselves entirely they still give too little."

"That puts me at my ease," said Beyle. "But what infuriates me is the fact that I entirely agree with Confalonieri's comment on the French. It is all the more annoying to me because I feel myself less and less a Frenchman."

"My friend! But you know yourself well enough. You know that France has ceased to be a home-land for you, and Italy has not become one. I know men who have lost everything for the sake of Italy."

Beyle thought how right she was, but tried to object: "I regard as my home-land every country that lives with such tempestuous energy as Italy. I regard as my home-land every country that seethes with living passions and struggles."

"Yes, but you admire it as an observer."

"That is better than talking about liberty with mistresses," replied Beyle.

Métilde flared up. "If Buonaparte had not once made it your remark would be most insolent."

"I don't want to hide behind the authority of anyone. Let me bear the responsibility for my words."

"In that case let me think it over. I must ask you not to come and see me until I send for you myself."

Beyle rose. He was very agitated. He tried to speak calmly but could not. He felt that in another moment he would become ridiculous, that his voice would quaver like that of a man begging for mercy. However, he managed to say, distinctly and firmly, that in her presence, and in her presence alone, the best sentiments and the noblest thoughts were awakened in him, that she could fully trust him as a friend, that in so far as she was concerned, he had never desired to play the Lovelace, that . . .

He stopped, because Métilde, with terror in her eyes, timidly raised her hand, as though fearing instinctively that he should say something unnecessary. He went out. More and more frequently the idea gripped him that he was gradually drawing nearer to Métilde's heart only to see, on getting quite close, an impassable gulf lying between them.

In the evening, by the light of the street lamps, he went into a little café on the banks of the Olona and opened a newspaper. A young girl in passing touched with her hip his walking-stick which was lying on the marble table. She bent down quickly and picking it up, apologized to Beyle with a frightened smile. Her unusually ardent dark eyes, her even teeth and her smile, which was at the same time tender, timid and gay, arrested Beyle's attention. He looked up from the newspaper, nodded to the girl and began to observe her.

Unfolding a handkerchief, she counted some copper coins.

Her face became sad. She shook her head, folded up the handkerchief and went towards the door.

"Why so quickly?" asked Beyle.

"I've changed my mind," replied the girl.

"One must never change one's mind on such occasions," said Beyle. "Sit down with me and tell me your name."

"My name is Zanze. I'm a lace-maker."

Beyle invited her to have supper with him. She willingly agreed, and only then did he notice how hungry she was. Her hands trembled from weakness

when she raised the cup of coffee to her lips. Nevertheless she chattered incessantly, telling him about her mother who was a chambermaid in an hotel, and the visitors there. She said that the Austrian officers paid the girls well and that she did not understand why the aristocrats and bourgeoisie hated the Austrians, when the parish priests preached absolute submission to the authorities. She said she was an honest Christian, and showed a crumpled old ticket of confession with the numerous registration marks of the priest. At the same time she wondered why none of the common people stayed long in prison, whereas it was enough for a man to have graduated from the university or to be well read for his term of imprisonment to be reckoned in years. The happiest moment in her life had been the spectacle of the arrival of the Holy Father, the Pope of Rome, from the hem of whose garment, from whose grey hair and blue eyes came the remission of sins. The next happiest was when an Austrian officer had given her fifty liras.

"He lived with me a whole year. Then they shifted him. He went away beyond the Alps and did not write me a single word," said the girl. Then she added: "Where shall we go?"

"Wherever you like," said Beyle.

On leaving the café they saw a peasant beating an obstinate donkey near a tree on the banks of the Olona. A passer-by tried to persuade him not to torment the animal.

"I didn't know my donkey had any relations," replied the owner of the donkey.

The compassionate passer-by parried the thrust: "I don't like to see one donkey beating another."

After these remarks they began to heap abuse on each other, and a crowd gathered. The drover threw a stone at his insulter. A passing army clerk barred the way and stopped the crowd. The stone hit the passer-by, who drew his knife. Beyle tried to get out of the crowd with his companion, but the affair took a nasty turn. In the twinkling of an eye the donkey's owner fell at Beyle's feet with a knife between his shoulder-blades. Zanze looked on calmly at what was happening. The army clerk seized the murderer and said with amazement: "You're a master of your job: not a drop of blood."

To which the culprit replied abruptly: "Do you, an office rat, soil yourself with your quills?"

"Well, now they'll give him two years' hard," said a locksmith to a grocer from a neighbouring shop, and he shouted for help to a policeman who was slowly walking towards the scene of the incident.

The culprit calmly took out his pipe, filled it with tobacco and sitting down on a bench near the tree, lit up and puffed with great solemnity while waiting to be arrested.

"I shan't be in prison more than a month. Remember, office rat, that my uncle is valet to the Cardinal Legate."

Beyle gazed at this handsome, stalwart man with unconcealed amazement. He had big features, large, ardent, yet calm eyes; complete self-assurance was written all over him. Beyle thought of the enormous amount of wasted energy of men to whom every book they read was imputed as a crime and whose murders were condoned after their seventh confession to some relation of the higher clergy. Two generations brought up in this way could absolutely weaken the moral fibre of a country. The Church and the police in combination were slowly castrating and debauching the Italian population, and converting it into an obedient instrument of their power and exploitation.

The public demanded that the names of all the witnesses should be taken. "Signor, give a couple of coins to that brawler," said Zanze. "And let's get away quickly! The most interesting part is all over, and there may be trouble later on."

Beyle followed her advice and made his way with her through the crowd.

In the hotel the rooms were separated by thin partitions. Everything could be heard through the walls. A party of young men, two of whom were apparently soldiers, were singing with street girls to the accompaniment of a couple of guitars; they broke some bottles and made a lot of noise. In the room to which Beyle and the girl were shown was a bed, a screen, a table covered with green cloth, two candles, two mugs and a bottle of red wine without a label. Zanze sat at the window and looked out into the street. Then without saying anything she went behind the screen, undressed and got into bed. She fell asleep almost at once. Beyle carefully put a coin on the bedside table and went out of the hotel. He felt that he had had a rest in those few hours. The strong coffee and red wine had driven sleep away. He sauntered about the streets and without realizing it, found himself an hour later in the Piazza Belgiojoso. He was amazed at the discovery. If he had gone in a cab and given by chance the name of this piazza, it would have been understandable. But he could not understand how his own legs had brought him there against his will.

"This is altogether too like a banal novel," he said to himself. And feeling ashamed, he walked under Métilde Viscontini's windows with a perplexed expression, forbidding himself to look at the lace curtains that were lit up from within by a pale-yellow light.

Late in the night the light went out, but Beyle was still pacing up and down the pavement. The porter, yawning and swearing, let in Cechina, Métilde's maid, who took a tender farewell of a young hairdresser, who waved his hat to her from round the corner. All the voices and sounds echoed loudly along the street. The old man grumbled a long time as he opened the door. Cechina vowed she would never again forget her key. The night patrol passed down the street, checking the documents of pedestrians. A young gendarme looked at Beyle with his keen eyes and coldly gave him back his French passport with a slowness that was intentionally emphasized. A moment later a couple of soldiers with naked swords went by with an arrested man, whose manacles rattled. Turning into a side-street, the prisoner whistled three times, and a soldier struck him with the flat of his sword. When the escort and their prisoner disappeared round the corner, a wicket in the side-street opened, and a young woman glanced up and down the street and ran out into the middle of the roadway. She examined the stones attentively for a long while and at last, after picking something up, rushed back to the wicket. After the short night, at dawn, carts with creaking wheels jolted past; after a short while the houses began to stir. His own footsteps, which had broken the stillness in the dark, already sounded softer to Beyle's ears. His walk had become tired, slow and less cautious. An hour after the first carts had passed on their way to the market, the door of the Viscontini house opened and Giulio, the grave-looking chef, with grey whiskers and shaven chin, set out for the market with a solemn gait, accompanied by a kitchen-boy. At that moment Giulio was the only man in the world whom Beyle envied. That happy man would return in an hour or so, would enter that house quite freely and without being announced, would walk about the rooms, would look at Métilde and see her.

"He's a sort of God, he's a sort of Jupiter, this Giulio! He is the most

blessed of the inhabitants of heaven!" said Beyle aloud, walking along the street and rejoicing that nobody heard him. "For in reality that is the happiness which I seek for in vain. I only need the opportunity to be in that house, and I shall live; then I shan't die!"

He found himself thinking that the happiness which he had possessed quite recently had disappeared through his own fault. In some way or other he had probably scared that rare bird which is known as a woman's confidence. But, on the other hand, had he not made sacrifices the whole time? "Have I not behaved like a lover, who has been deprived of the gift of speech by a woman's command, who has spoken only after two years when she has given him permission? She undoubtedly loves, and this love hinders her from noticing me. And meanwhile the man she loves has forsaken her. That exile is in her eyes a real hero. And the fact that he found in himself the strength to leave her merely confirms in her eyes that heroism. I am involved in a small circle of civilian politicians of Milan. I don't, of course, know a hundredth part of the enormous work of liberation which these men are doing even in the army. My role is reduced to that of receiving and transmitting. I never asked for anything more. I am the ordinary bourgeois Beyle—I live and move among these people. I am the observing Stendhal, I am the Italian Salvati, who keeps a diary, a creature of another planet, who observes the life on this. *Métilde* sees only Beyle and will never see anyone else in me. Who will tell her about the sufferings of *Dominique*, the incalculable riches of *Stendhal*, the owner of thousands of lives?"

The hour of forgiveness arrived. *Métilde* kept her word, but immediately checked his raptures. She said to him plainly: "I know that you love me. I also know that there is not a man more devoted to me among all the clever people who enter this little drawing-room. But I have spent too much of my strength on people. I don't want any more disillusionments. I can't fight society. You will not come more often than twice a month, if you want to see me alone without giving rise to any gossip for which I must give explanations."

"But may I not write to you?"

"If the letters are reasonable. Remember: one imprudent word and the twice a month will become twice a year."

Beyle capitulated.

The Marchesa Traversi, without regard for her cousin's reputation, told the story of the tragedy of *Métilde*'s rupture with Ugo Foscolo. It was in a little mountain village near Lake Maggiore. A saddled horse stood outside the window of a cottage. Foscolo with a whip in his hand ran to the door, having already said good-bye. *Métilde*, throwing off her dress and drawing Foscolo towards her, embraced him with her naked arm round his neck. In this state she came to the door to see him spring into the saddle, whip up the horse and ride quickly away.

"In every woman there lives a *cocotte*," the eloquent gossip added to her story.

"This is *Métilde*'s best woman friend, but to tell *Métilde*, to warn her, to inform her of all this gossip is just as necessary as it is base. Beyle will not stoop to this necessary baseness, but he will hate the Marchesa Traversi all the more."

*Métilde* shrugged her shoulders, as she listened to Beyle's furious attacks on her cousin. Her gaze became cold, she regarded Beyle's behaviour as

insulting to the Marchesa Traversi and consequently tactless in regard to herself.

"Here is another proof that my straightforwardness is making me lose my common sense."

His strong passion for *Métilde* caused him both to admire and hate her; he hated her more than he did *Foscolo*.

*Métilde* left as suddenly and without warning as *Beyle* had been wont to do when he roamed about the towns and villages of Lombardy, everywhere changing his name, mingling business with idleness, enjoying new impressions, "and leaving no trace on anything of *Stendhal's* searching and inquisitive eye." *Beyle* came four times to the *Piazza Belgiojoso*; at last *Ludovico* ceased to be even polite.

*Beyle* decided to do an inadmissible thing: he gave him a few gold coins; *Ludovico* laughed, politely returned the money to him and said plainly: "All that the Signor cares to ask, and all that my conscience allows me to say, does not require a *baiocco*."

"I want to ask you, *Ludovico*, where the Signora is and when she is going to return."

"The Signora has gone to her children at *Volterra*. She won't return for a long time yet. She has taken only *Cechina* with her and forbidden letters to be forwarded to her."

*Beyle*, without calling at the hotel, got into the first mail-coach and went to *Volterra*.

In the morning he was stopped by the frontier guards. They found that his passport was not quite in order and to enter *Tuscany* it was necessary to obtain the visa of the prefect of police of *Milan*. *Beyle* had either to go back or take a risk. While waiting for the return mail-coach he walked along the bank of the *Ticino* in *Pavia* and was in a state of mind bordering on madness. Beyond the town, at the sight of a boatman smoking a pipe, he began to devise fantastic plans for crossing the *Ticino* illegally. The bearded boatman looked at him with his mocking and comprehending eyes, while keeping hold of the rope and puffing at the pipe which he held between his strong yellow teeth. *Beyle* walked past him four times. The boatman wagged his head and said as though to himself: "The cursed gendarmes shoot from the bank if you have someone with you when you approach it."

*Beyle* nonchalantly jingled some gold napoleons that glittered in the palm of his left hand.

The ferryman looked out of the corner of his eye and as though replying to an unspoken invitation, said: "Well, all right! Gold is always gold, even if the portrait of *Napoleon* is on the coin! You need only disguise yourself. I live not far away, near *Belgiojoso*."

*Beyle* trembled at the sound of the name.

The ferryman gave him a penetrating look and asked: "Do you know anybody in that village?"

"Ah, it's the local village that is called *Belgiojoso*," thought *Beyle*.

"No, I don't know anybody," he said aloud, "but I must be in *Florence* to-morrow."

"Well, you know yourself that's impossible."

In the evening, having wrapped up his face and disguised himself as an old woman, *Beyle*, half lying in the boat, crossed the muddy river and landed safely not far from *Stradella*. The boatman said he was taking his sick mother to

the surgeon who lived at Stradella. The boatman's sick mother soon became the Milanese citizen Arrigo Beyle again and safely began a new journey.

Volterra is one of the highest places in southern Tuscany. It is an ancient town on the summit of a rocky hill, isolated and deserted, surrounded with huge walls, the creation of the fabulous Etruscans, and medieval ramparts. The hot sun heats the brown stones of the walls and the defence towers. Everything speaks of the fact that this insuperable stronghold witnessed the rapacious invasions and bloody wars of ancient Roman days and the days of the first popes. Around the town standing on an isolated island amid the sea of foliage and visible from afar spreads the peaceful country landscape: strips of pasture land stand out in yellow patches among the silvery green of the olive trees and gold-green vineyards. The ancient fortress seems a strange contradiction and challenge to the peaceful country landscape. The green slopes with their gentle contours, the misty forests on the horizon—all breathe of peace round the solitary brown hill. Peace enters the soul of the traveller as soon as he passes beyond the walls of the town. The ancient streets, the low stone houses roofed with tiles, the narrow passages where the loaded donkeys can scarcely pass one another, the piazzas gilded by the Tuscan sunshine—all breathe of idleness and calm. When Beyle entered the piazza, some old women were sitting on the stone slabs near the church knitting stockings and darning linen; lines stretched from house to house were hung with washing, children were playing in the street and blocking the way: the visitor had to turn into a side-street; iron lamps with sharp ends jutted out on the corners of the buildings; a passer-by in the darkness might easily hurt himself against them. To Beyle the whole place seemed to be imbued with an age-old peace.

Wishing to be unobserved, he took advantage of the fact that it was Friday—a market day—and mingling with the crowd of peasants, he went along into the piazza of the town. Tall peasants in black wide-brimmed hats, motley jackets of coloured material reaching to the waist, with eagle-like eyes, hooked noses, and black eyebrows, light and brisk in their movements, brought an animation to the cathedral square alive with the creaking of the huge solid wheels, fiery invective and strident chatter. Other days and other men peeped through this market crowd. In the free and bold gestures of the inhabitants of the Tuscan plateau there was the martial grandeur and imperious simplicity of the ancient generations of warriors who had inhabited these mountains. The simple market square looked like the place of assembly of a rebel city, where the partisans of feudal wars select their spears, halberds and fire-arms before the battle.

Passing the square, Beyle went in the direction of the college, in which Métilde Viscontini's two sons were being educated. He had prudently provided himself with a pair of horn-rimmed spectacles, an olive-coloured frock-coat, a new walking-stick and a green top-hat. In this guise, attracting the attention of the bored townsfolk, he walked through the quiet little streets of Volterra. The upper storeys of the houses in the towns of northern Italy almost touch one another. As Beyle went by, the shutters were opened, inquisitive eyes gazed at him from the balconies, outspoken questions were hurled after him, and when he reached the gates, all the streets of Volterra already knew of the arrival of a foreigner.

The worst of all was that in leaving the town he ran into Métilde. Cechina carried a sunshade, and two boys in animated conversation walked in front along the pavement.



Alas! He was recognized immediately. She herself went up to him and said firmly: "You want to get the reputation of being my lover. That is a base thing. Go back at once to Florence, stay at Nicolini's in the Via dei Fossi. Don't return to Milan till I give you permission."

She did not allow him to utter a word. One of the boys, looking back at Beyle as he went away, said: "Mama, he is not at all like a beggar, and probably he wanted to ask something."

## CHAPTER TWENTY-FIVE

THE DAY HE ARRIVED IN FLORENCE WAS A HEAVY DAY FOR BEYLE. THE VIA DEI FOSSI, a short, fairly wide street, came out at one end on the Arno embankment, at the other end in a piazza. On his way from the coach station, Beyle called in at the second storey of the Palazzo Nicolini. This high-sounding name designated a curious three-storeyed building of dark grey stone, in which Frenchmen residing in Italy usually stayed. Having rested after the journey, Beyle went for a stroll round the town and treading on some stone slabs on which the lilies of Florence were engraved, he wondered how this red symbol had come to be the emblem of Florence. He recalled another lily, the white lily of the Bourbons, and reflected on the colour symbols of time. Thus he began to associate historical periods with colour; colour became the symbol of entire epochs.

*White, red, black—were all significant symbols of changing times.* The ancient red lily of Florence had changed its colour more than once: from white it became red and vice-versa, according to which party gained the upper hand in the Commune. Thinking of these things, Beyle passed Tornabuoni, the Strozzi palace and, leaving the Lanzi gallery on the right, went up on to the Old Bridge. Newspapers were usually on sale near the Palazzo Acciaiuoli. This time there was not a single newsvendor. Beyle decided to go to San Miniato and enjoy from there the view over Cascine and the course of the River Arno. The absence of newspapers surprised him. He approached the first comer on the bridge and asked him the reason. The man waved his hands and said only one word: "Spain." Beyle failed to understand and asked a tobacconist. The latter likewise shrugged his shoulders and shaking his head in a perplexed manner, replied grudgingly: "I don't know, Signor."

And contrary to the usual politeness of the Tuscan people and even to the detriment of his trade he added timidly that he had no time to waste and that in any case he was not given to talking.

In the evening there was a faro party at Colonel Scotti's house. Some thirty persons sat round a huge green table. The host had not yet come home when the game started. Beyle played without paying heed to the game, losing all the time. His absent-mindedness was so great that he knocked over a candlestick and set fire to the gauze dress of the woman sitting next to him. A hubbub started in the room, and nobody noticed when Scotti came in, pale and excited. "Gentlemen," he began. "Ferdinand has been arrested. There is revolution in Spain. The police have confiscated the newspapers."

Everybody abandoned the game. The lady whose dress had been set on fire and had red spots on her naked shoulder forgot her pain, and her companions likewise forgot what had happened to her.

Scotti related the following: "A young officer, Rafaele Riego, who recently

arrived in Naples, returned to Spain and started military operations against the Government with a handful of men. At first Riego's detachment, which was joined by Colonel Quiroga, was defeated. He had only forty men left, and the cause was regarded as lost. Ferdinand and the Monarchist generals, who had fled to Cadiz, raised their heads on hearing of Riego's defeat. But then a miracle happened: huge masses of the population from Corunna to Barcelona demanded the overthrow of tyranny. I haven't the latest news. I only know that in Madrid the crowd broke into the palace and on their insistence Ferdinand, who had returned to the capital, was obliged to take an oath of fidelity to the constitution."

Beyle looked at his companions. The gay Italians, who a few minutes before had had a carefree air, suddenly turned into reckless and daring men: they shouted words of greeting, they clapped their hands, they quickly decided to take action, and after Scotti had said that a special meeting of the *ventas* should be held, they shook one another by the hand and dispersed. Beyle remained alone. He decided that events had released him from Métilde's prohibition. To-morrow he would go to Milan. He was breathing with full lungs. He neither noticed the big drops of rain that soaked him to the skin and poured in streams from his face, nor the storm clouds that were quickly gathering over Florence. The forked lightning in the nocturnal sky seemed to him like the blinding thunderstorm of war about to break over stupefied Europe. He recalled what had been said about unity of action and expected that the movement prepared in Italy and initiated in Spain would spread to the Apennines at a signal from Riego.

In the morning everything in the city spoke of suppressed excitement. Patrols went through the streets stopping pedestrians; the police had the look of a tiger preparing to spring. The coaches for the south were stormed, those for the north went empty.

Beyle took his seat in the coach alone.

On the road a squadron of gendarmes, raising the dust, dashed past the mail-coach at a light trot. The villages and hamlets seemed to slumber, knowing nothing about the happenings in the neighbouring peninsula. And only at the ferries the repeated inspection of passports and the increased pickets of gendarmes on the banks and at the fords, in the boats and on the ferries, indicated that Austria was preparing to counter the movement.

In Milan the movement was in full swing. People were taciturn, but their eyes glowed, and from the way a chance pedestrian shuddered when Beyle asked him for his newspaper, he realized that the nerves of the Milanese were strained.

Federigo Confalonieri scarcely slept at all these days. Some vast work took up all his time. With red eyelids, pale but cheerful, he gave instructions, summoned people, dispatched emissaries, spoke in a rejuvenated, ringing voice. With him were Silvio Pellico, more cheerful than ever; Borsieri, with sharpened features, stern and resolute. Scores and hundreds of other high-spirited enthusiastic men surrounded Confalonieri.

Beyle went from one to the other. He felt rather out of place, rather superfluous among these men who were engaged in a cause that might cost them their lives.

Baron Binder and Count Bubna, the Governor of Milan, sent to "the respected Count Confalonieri" a short polite note requesting him to cease publishing the newspaper *Conciliatore* and to give a list of all the contributors.

Confalonieri replied that he would submit to the order, but he had no list as he himself did not know all the contributors to the newspaper.

Next day the whole work of the light-signalling telegraph was put into code on instructions from the North. It was forbidden to accept private dispatches. The post accepted only open letters. In the evening Olivieri arrived with a shot-wound in his shoulder, tired, dusty and exhausted.

He came into Confalonieri's kitchen dressed in the robes of a monk with a shaven head. He was disguised beyond recognition and had succeeded in passing himself off as a mendicant friar. He handed Confalonieri a little casket containing holy relics, among which was a note from General Guglielmo Pepe. Olivieri related what had happened:

"At dawn on 2nd July the Carbonaro Minichini came into the barracks of the Bourbon cavalry accompanied by two lieutenants, and told them about the events in Spain. The Carbonaro regiment decided they must act. Shouting 'Long live Italy!' the cavalymen rushed to the horses. Austrian sentries were already posted outside the stables. The gates were shut; a carabineer took aim and scratched my shoulder with a bullet, for which he paid with his life. The bolts were smashed in a moment. General Pepe, holding his horse by the reins, went about giving orders that all should assemble outside the town of Nola before the police managed to dispatch reports or the local priest to sound the alarm. Two officers and five cavalymen held up the mail-coaches. I mounted the semaphore tower and transmitted signals, which the neighbouring semaphorist refused to accept. If only you had seen how our cavalymen ran outside the town one after the other! The thread of revolt strung them into a necklace. On a hill outside the town they lined up in threes and with loud shouts marched off to Naples.

"I joined them just before Naples, after I had wrecked the semaphore in the Monte Forte camp. I worked with beacons, as we had arranged. And by the evening eight thousand Carbonari had assembled. If only you had seen what fine fellows they were, how they were armed and how proud they looked with their red, black and blue cockades. Next day when they entered Naples there was a certain amount of shooting. There was a little skirmish, nothing like what I went through in Lithuania. The King surrendered and accepted the conditions dictated to him by the Carbonaro General. And now read what he said on 13th July: 'Almighty God, who readest the hearts of men and the future times! Smite me with Thy terrible vengeance, if I swear insincerely or intend to violate my fidelity to the people of Italy.'"

"The job is done," remarked Confalonieri. "The Spanish constitution is essential throughout Italy."

Métilde Dembowska-Viscontini returned to Milan. She was very excited, alarmed and sad. Ludovico whom she wanted to send to London was arrested. She sold her house, counted up all her diamonds and gold; took the money out of the bank and gave it to Confalonieri. She acted as in a dream, and all her instructions were like the unconscious movements of a somnambulist. Confalonieri said she was left a beggar. While waiting for events to take place, she felt a terrible strain. She yearned for the freedom of Italy and the return of him on whom she would again be able to gaze without fear. With the departure of the last Austrian there would open for her the prospect of the return of the exile from London. The emptiness of her society life disappeared. In all the houses, and in her rooms likewise, there was that straightforwardness, simplicity and earnestness which revolution gives to people. Métilde was also

anxious to be worthy of her friend. And in these days that alien Frenchman Beyle came and bothered her with his presence. Once during a conversation with her he absentmindedly drew a sketch of a pistol on a piece of letter paper. The drawing had been so well executed that it was obvious it had been repeated on many occasions. Métilde paid no heed to it at the time, thinking it natural under the present circumstances that a man should possess a weapon of that kind. But Beyle had quite a different idea—to him the object drawn represented the surest means of putting an end to his own misery.

One day he talked about going to the North.

"I want to go to England," he said.

Her eyes brightened up; she gave him a glance full of confidence and friendliness. Then a shadow passed over her face again.

"I can transmit your greetings," Beyle went on.

"Thank you, please do so," said Métilde with an effort.

This was too cruel. She gazed at him as though she was looking at an empty space.

What was known to the direct participants in the events taking place in the kingdom of Naples, what was being prepared in the kingdom of Sardinia or Piedmont, where, instead of that Neapolitan oaf Ferdinand, the clever and artful Victor Emmanuel was in power, what was happening in Austrian Italy and Milan, was known only to the upper circles of the Carbonaro society, which had a secret leader in the person of Federigo Confalonieri. The vast mass of the population of Italy still knew nothing. The inhabitants of the Santa Margherita quarter were the best informed about the events in the south. In that disused monastery, where the cells had long been turned into torture-chambers and detention cells with iron grilles, armed prison warders—*segondini*—wandered about the monastery corridors; the prefecture of police was accommodated on the ground floor, and in the upper storey was the terrible Salvoti with his pack of sleuths.

The events in Spain had already put the Austrians on their guard and brought about the replacement of the whole of the staff of the Milan post office.

Olivieri came to Beyle and told him that he had become a post office employee.

"I'm an old corporal, my career is finished, and you'll agree that the uniform of a postman suits me very well," he said to Beyle, as he puffed at a huge pipe with an air of complete unconcern.

Beyle looked at him attentively and remarked: "You change your profession rather frequently. How long is it since you were a monk?"

"I know our country well, Signor, and I swim like a fish in water. It would be boring to live without changes."

"Well, Corporal's Pipe, what are you going to do at the post office?"

"The Corporal's Pipe, Signor, is a block-headed postman. They give him the work that doesn't require intelligence and even, on the contrary, that requires stupidity."

"I don't understand you."

"Well then, Signor, last week you sent to England a letter in which you informed a bookseller named Benorme that you were about to set out for London. Bear in mind that Signor Salvoti is very much interested in the man who wrote *The History of Painting in Italy*, about which your English friends are writing articles in the newspapers. And as I have a fairly good reputation,

I have been entrusted with the job of delivering the correspondence to forty persons, including yourself. I won't mention what a sensation was caused by a letter in your handwriting of 21st December, 1819. You wrote in it [here Olivieri took out a copy of the letter]: 'Thousands of bayonets and dozens of guillotines are incapable of stopping the movement of political ideas in Italy. It is as senseless as trying to save oneself from gout with a handful of gold.' You know, Signor, your letter is not signed, but the handwriting is already known. I'm afraid copies have already been taken of all your letters addressed to Baron Mareste in Paris. Now, if you want to write, don't drop your letters in the post. When I bring your correspondence, I'll take your letters. It will be better like that. But the best thing will be if you write more in general about the theatre, the ballet, or Rossini, with whom you dine every day."

Without saying anything Beyle held out his hand to him in a friendly way. Then he got a bottle of Chianti, which he had brought with him from Florence, some anchovies, a couple of glasses, and for a whole hour he chatted with his faithful and devoted friend. Chianti is a wine that takes effect slowly, and it was some time before the conversation assumed a friendly and cheerful character and dispersed Beyle's gloomy thoughts for a few hours.

It was true that Beyle dined almost every day in Milan with the composer Rossini, whose acquaintance he had made in Florence. Olivieri was right. Only he did not say that the remarkable Frenchman Paul-Louis Courier also dined every day with Rossini, Colonel Scotti and Beyle. An excellent connoisseur of the Greek language, Courier studied every day in the Laurentian library the Greek manuscript of the pastoral tale of *Daphnis and Chloe*. After spending a few hours in the circular reading room, he would devote the rest of the day to studying the Italian villages. He would go to Fiesole, Setignano, and other villages of Tuscany, and his excursions aroused the interest of the Florentine prefect of police.

An intercepted letter, in which Courier openly advocated the downfall of the Austrian regime and wrote about the terrible evil of religion, that plague of Italy, gave the Austrian police, directed by the Tuscan political orchestra, a clear idea of the personality of Courier. But the police did not want to give away their methods of keeping watch on the citizens of Florence. They thought of another method of compromising Courier. The Jesuit librarian Furia placed in the parchment manuscript of *Daphnis and Chloe* an ink-soiled slip of paper, and on the following day Courier was prosecuted for having wilfully damaged a valuable manuscript. Courier did not remember, did not know, whether he himself or somebody else had damaged the manuscript. He had just as little sense of guilt as he had desire to justify himself. He fled. And of course they did not pursue him. To prove his presence at the meetings of the Carbonaro *venta* in the forest near Setignano was impossible, as all the conspirators who frightened society assembled in masks. Such was the difference between the town *ventas* and those in the country. In a town there was a larger population and it was easier to efface oneself. In the country *ventas* were all well acquainted with one another. Every step of a country conspirator was observed. Whereas in town the conspirators assembled at the card table or at a drawing-room concert, in a village this camouflage was impossible. In a few cases a member of the *venta*—a bell-ringer—would give what appeared to be a casual, solitary plangent stroke of the church bell, which served as a signal for the meeting. And then he would go at once to the priest to excuse

himself for having caught hold of the bell-rope in a state of intoxication. In all other cases direct disguise was used. The men gathered at the appointed place in masks.

Beyle had been accustomed to postal camouflage since the time of the Russian campaign. After Olivieri's warning Beyle began to write differently. He informed Mareste beforehand in a letter from Turin beginning with the words: "Don't be afraid of the Corporal's Pipe." The next letter, dated at Bologna, began with the words: "In future, kind friend, address all your letters in the name of the noble signore Domenico Vismara in Navarra; you may write quite frankly without restraining yourself in your expressions and judgments regarding what is taking place in Italy and Spain." The letter was signed: "Domenico Vismara, engineer of Navarra."

Letters to Baron Mareste from citizen Dupuy and from the Milanese dramatic critic, citizen Laubry, began to appear. The letters related such things about the royal personages of Italy that they filled the reader with disgust, like the most loathsome reports of criminal proceedings. In a letter under the signature of Laubry, Beyle abused Baron Stendhal and the Turin engineer Vismara. He communicated to Baron Mareste a whole series of observations on his friends, whose fictitious names could not reveal anything to the uninitiated reader.

Then began a series of wanderings. Taking himself firmly in hand, Beyle decided not to go and see Métilde until he was cured of his pain, and perhaps not to go and see her at all.

Life in gloomy, burnt-out Europe was incredibly burdensome.

Italy alone preserved and fanned the fire of the sacred heart of liberty. The revolution, which had failed in France, would soon envelop the whole of Italy, and as this nation was full of indestructible energy, as the waves of hot blood poured through these strong, steel-like muscles, as the living and beautiful human thought glowed in those dark eyes, it was of course clear that there were no insurmountable barriers for this finest example of the human race.

Beyle travelled round the cities of Lombardy with renewed energy. He wrote a letter to Baron Mareste from Mantua and named fantastic cities. Only Mareste could understand that the town of *Cularo* was Grenoble, that *Mero* was Rome, and only Mareste could understand the stamped signature: "Maison de commerce Clapier & Co." However, one line made the letter clear: "At Mantua, as everywhere else, they are talking about Spain." But while this indefatigable Frenchman was travelling from town to town as a man of no definite occupation, while he slept during hours when other people were working, and went out to some unknown work in the hours when other people slept, while he concerned himself with the life of the towns, listened to conversations, ate, drank and made merry on nobody knew whose cash, events were developing with furious rapidity. The Spanish affairs, which had shaken the royal authority, alarmed the northern gendarmes' Internationale. The "Holy Alliance" of the monarchs convened a congress in the little Austrian town of Laibach, and Metternich proposed summoning to this congress Ferdinand, King of Naples. In spite of the cautious warnings of the Carbonaro *venta*, the Neapolitan Government delayed the arrest of the King, and Ferdinand left for the north. There, having flung the text of his oath on the table, he cried out madly to Metternich that "the whole of Italy would soon be in the grip of a popular rising, and thus the sacred rights of kings would be trampled on by the revolutionary south of Europe."

At a secret meeting the Laibach congress decided to crush the Carbonari of Naples with the help of intervention and to restore the absolute monarchy. And then began the hasty formation of punitive detachments.

In Milan, Confalonieri received information about this decision late in the night. He had a note from the Carignan Prince Charles Albert of Savoy, who was at enmity with the King of Sardinia and Piedmont, Victor Emmanuel, and had recently been received into the *venta* of the Carbonari.

Charles Albert hated Austria. The armed Carbonari of Piedmont expected to overthrow Victor Emmanuel and to make Charles Albert an instrument of the revolution. The time to act had arrived. It was impossible to delay any longer after the decision to crush Naples by the force of foreign monarchist arms.

Returning to Milan, Beyle listened with displeasure to the plans and proposals of his friends.

"Nothing good will come of anything in which Princes are involved."

"You don't know Italy," retorted Confalonieri.

"On the other hand I know France and I know the nature of revolutions. The kings must have their heads cut off at once, so that they may not take advantage of your first mistake. I have more than once referred to the various colours of the Carbonaro cockade. Look, there is black and blue in it, besides red. Leave the red, and get rid of the rest."

"You don't understand the actual conditions which make it impossible for us to answer for the population as a whole: we have the troops and officers, but the peasantry, groaning under the Austrian taxes, will break away from us at the first demand of the Cardinal Legate. We hate Austria in the name of liberty. Metternich is setting the powerful Catholic Church against us."

The Carbonaro Prince turned out to be a loyal Prince. Before rising against Victor Emmanuel, he went to "take counsel" with him and betrayed the movement. Victor Emmanuel, sullen and infuriated, oppressed by the burdensome Austrian instructions, did not order Charles Albert to be arrested, but wrote a manifesto on his abdication. Looking at Charles Albert with contempt he said: "Take this to my brother Charles Felix, who will be King to-morrow. Give the copy to your Carbonaro rabble. And you yourself, if you are an honest officer, lay down your sword before your lawful King."

The Carbonaro Prince, going down the stairs, wondered how he could get out of a dishonourable situation with honour. He wondered how his favourite hero, Hamlet, Prince of Denmark, would have acted, but with the words "to be or not to be" on his lips he was overtaken by the news that in Alessandria, Colonel Ansaldi and Captain Palma and their dragoons had taken possession of the fortresses and declared a rising in favour of Charles Albert. "To be"—decided Charles Albert. His melancholy vanished. He decided to act the part of a resolute and energetic character. He named himself as the initiator of the revolution, announced the convening of parliament, and on 13th March, from the balcony of his palace, proclaimed Piedmont a free country governed by a constitution on the Spanish model.

Confalonieri did not hold out. The Carbonaro Mazzini, who was twice stopped at the frontier, delivered to Charles Albert a letter, in which the leader of the Milanese Carbonari begged him to cross the frontier immediately, attack the Austrian garrison in Milan and "unite the Lombardo-Venetian province to the whole of free Italy."

## CHAPTER TWENTY-SIX

IN THE COURSE OF A SINGLE MONTH BEYLE VISITED TWELVE CITIES OF THE LOMBARDO-Venetian province. With a passport in the name of Domenico Vismara, engineer of Navarra, he left for Turin, where he wrote a letter to Mareste, whom he called Baron Lussinge. Mareste, who was born and grew up in Piedmont, was almost Beyle's only correspondent during this time. Towards the end Beyle wrote to him in the name of a certain *Robert*, and in the name of *Auguste*, and finally informed him that he would shortly have to leave Italy.

At the most decisive moment, when Confalonieri was waiting every minute for the victorious march of the Piedmontese troops from Turin to Milan to overthrow the Austrian yoke, Beyle had the imprudence to make some sceptical remarks to him. He was standing with a glass of punch in a corner of the smoke-clouded drawing-room, looking like a wolf baited by dogs and shouting, as he replied to all his assailants at once:

"It is not so much a question of putting to flight the Austrian dragoons lining the square from Mercanti to La Scala, and of putting a Milanese merchant in Santa Margherita as Governor in place of the Austrians, as that not a single workman in Turin or Milan understands your movement. At the very moment when the citizens of Naples and Turin are seized with enthusiasm for the Constitution, the vast mass of the Italian people is asleep under the black cross and takes no part in the revolution. I saw a Turin factory the day when Charles Albert was appointed Regent with the dragoons shouting 'hurrrah!' There was a dead silence in the factory. The Austrians did not even post a picket of guards there."

"What do you mean?" asked Confalonieri furiously. "We acted quite correctly: there was not a single regiment, company or squadron that was not on our side. Do you think that the labourers of Lombardy are more necessary to us than armed carabineers, that your illiterate workers from the factories will make up to us for our devoted Carbonaro officers? We need military forces to get rid of the last remnants of feudal prejudices, we need military forces to make sure that the Italian merchant gets his profits and to save the townsmen from the unbearable taxes of plundering Austria. We need our own national Government that will safeguard the peaceful development of our enterprises."

"I always said your movement was full of contradictions!" shouted Beyle, who had been swallowing great gulps of punch during Confalonieri's tirade. "You talk about the Constitution getting rid of the débris of feudal prejudices, and at the same time you want to win over Charles Albert. Well then, you must know that in Europe there has appeared a new breed of Hamletized, melancholic, disillusioned prince, who will betray you at any moment. No doubt you will be talking about new privileges for the class of capable men. In place of the dynastic knights you will foist on the people the knights of profit, the heroes of the counter—those are your capable men. Your prosperity will be the prosperity of the thick-headed dealer, who needs an illiterate peasantry and workers browbeaten by your priests."

"What Beyle says is revolting!" exclaimed Silvio Pellico. "The culture of Italy is a religious culture. The Cross of Savoy, white and pure, will rally the Italian people much sooner than your Jacobin speeches."

"But I say," declared Beyle furiously, "that the programme of the Supreme



*Venta* must not be departed from. Kings and princes should have their heads cut off, and the Cardinals should be hanged. It is necessary to cleanse the atmosphere befouled with the incense of priests. One can't breathe on account of it even in your beautiful country. In the end all the crowned charlatans will agree among themselves, sooner or later. At present what do you represent? A small group of aristocrats and bourgeois, who have formed a military conspiracy."

The insult was outrageous as Beyle himself was aware. There was silence for a moment, then Borsieri remarked venomously: "Foscolo's woman friend has made an atheist of Beyle."

"Atheism has made me the friend of Foscolo," replied Beyle. "Don't be angry if I have behaved like a rat surrounded by cats. You have bitten me enough. But remember that I am not keen on paradoxes. You will have to return to the ideas of Babeuf, if you want to put your forces into the reconstruction of society. You have an excellent source of ideas. It is your countryman, the Carbonaro Buonarotti. You are all too much infected with the mania of cautiousness and respect. Bear in mind that this mania will not survive the present century."

"Buonarotti does not suit us. We have discussed and rejected his proposal," said Confalonieri ponderously. "Our immediate task is the free unification of Italy and the expulsion of the foreigners. We will achieve this at all costs. Don't forget, Beyle, that your dangerous excesses are just as harmful to Italy as complete inactivity. In my view you are a very dangerous man."

Just then a visitor came into the room without being announced. As all were too much taken up with the strained conversation, nobody paid any attention to him.

A moment later he stood beside Confalonieri and whispered something in his ear. Confalonieri went pale and raising his hand, said: "Gentlemen! Disperse to your homes, singly. Don't talk about anything. Destroy the correspondence. Three of our friends have been arrested. Olivieri has perished in making an attempt on the life of Salvoti."

Beyle cried out aloud. The young man turned to him and said: "He and I were working at the most dangerous post. Salvoti obtained the lists. Olivieri tried to get them away from him. But when Olivieri rushed to the secret cupboard, Salvoti pressed a button and my comrade fell through the floor. I know the spot. Under the stone flag there is a deep well, and nobody inquires about what happens to the man who falls through."

Beyle returned home dazed. "If the whole Milanese movement has been discovered, it is a bad business. We have led the police, the Jesuits and Count Bubna so long by the nose that now we shall have to stop laughing."

It was not yet late so he decided to go on to Métilde Viscontini's. She received him calmly. He decided to try a last way of finding out her attitude towards him. After a few trifling remarks he said to her: "I have come to say good-bye to you."

"When will you return?" asked Métilde with an absentminded look.

"Probably never," replied Beyle.

She hastily changed the conversation and said: "The Governor of Milan has left a very small garrison in the city and taken the troops to Turin without waiting for Charles Albert's decision. Yesterday the Austrians routed the whole Piedmontese army at Navarra. You are the first in Milan to hear of this. After finishing with Turin, Austria will cast her net in Lombardy. You will

be well advised to go. You are a Frenchman, and you have nothing to do here. If you go to England, go and see . . ."

She glanced at Beyle, and saw that he looked quite calm; she was silent for a moment and then she concluded with a sad and tender smile, which Beyle had more than once noticed with delight on her lips and which made her resemble so much the beautiful Herodias with the closed eyes portrayed by Leonardo da Vinci's pupil: ". . . Rossetti and his friends."

Beyle nodded.

"I like Rossetti and Berchet especially for their amazing interpretation of Dante. They say that the author of *The Divine Comedy* belonged to an underground political sect, whose aim was the revolution of human society. They interpret every symbol of Dante's poem as the programme of the Carbonari of the fourteenth century. Ask Rossetti to explain his theory to you. You'll be enchanted by his delightful voice."

Beyle rose, hastily kissed Métilde's hand and went out.

Hatless, absentmindedly stumbling into passers-by, he returned home. Every step took him away from the land which had become so dear to him. There was the grey bulk of Casa Acerbi, the massive stone doorway and pilasters, the deep-set windows. All the severe, magnificent architecture of Palladio, alternating with the unfinished and rudely projecting stones of the lower storey, with the gradually levelled surface of the walls mounting to the roof. Would he ever be able to leave this house that had become dear to him, leave this city, where every stone was familiar to him, where the air and light had made his very breath and sight their own.

The steps seemed to be difficult to mount. Weary, heavy-laden and slouching, he entered his room.

Sofia, with a bewildered look, handed him a summons to present himself immediately at the Prefecture. He turned pale, realizing that matters had taken a very serious turn.

But it was impossible for him to go.

Santa Margherita, a nunnery in Milan, became after its suppression the headquarters of the police administration of the Austrian authorities in Lombardy. There also were the cells for the preliminary detention of arrested persons. The cells of the nuns were turned into quarters for prostitutes arrested in the streets of Milan. The political prisoners were kept in the vaulted cellars—low dungeons in the literal sense of the word. The complete absence of light in the narrow, evil-smelling vaults caused the prisoners to contract a severe form of ophthalmia. On the ground floor were the cells, where the inquisitors and procurators carried out interrogations. The spacious reception rooms and parlours of the nunnery had been converted into places where a detachment of gendarmes was constantly on duty. At the top of the building were accommodated the brigades of spies and flying agents and the offices of the junior inquisitors, who received the information brought in by the spies. On the roof of the principal church, beside the cross, was the apparatus of the engineer Chappe: a coding heliograph, which in the hands of an expert signaller communicated first of all with the barracks of the Austrian garrison and then with the signaller on the roof of Milan Cathedral. From there the coded dispatches were passed on by light signals to Vienna.

On these nights the most tired man in Milan was the police signaller. Vienna flashed dispatches and the heliograph could not keep up with them in transmitting

the reports. Peering into the darkness with his tired eyes and fortifying himself with strong coffee with a dash of liqueur, the signaller filled in the forms, cursing his fate and treating with unconcern the stirring events, the reports of which were transmitted to him by the lifeless, soundless dots and dashes of light. The Austrian troops devastated the south and the north on orders from Laibach, executing the will of Alexander and Franz. Metternich prescribed ferocious penalties. Charles Albert took to flight. In Naples Ferdinand ordered the Carbonaro leader Guglielmo Pepe to be found and executed. The Pope of Rome cursed the movement and excommunicated all who took part in it. The Catholic who received a Carbonaro into his house was declared an outlaw. Villages and hamlets which had sheltered the rebels were burnt down and annihilated by artillery fire. All newspapers were shut down. Prison was the penalty for uttering the word "constitution." All the faithful sons of the Church were called upon to come to the aid of the Kings, who had been forced to give their consent to popular representation. The coded messages went further: "Organize from among the young men secret detachments of exterminators. Don't spare gold for them. Cancel all affairs arising from the killing of Carbonari in the streets. Order priests to make a note of the names at confession. Introduce weekly confession for women, with the threat of excommunication for ignorance of the way of thinking of their husbands, brothers, fathers and children. Organize the defeat of liberal ideas from the church pulpits. Confiscate the property of wealthy Jews and Spanish families living in Naples, even if they are not implicated in the movement."

The last dispatch ran: "Notify Inquisitor Salvoti, that if the arrest of all suspicious persons in Milan is not carried out and all centres of rebellion in the Lombardo-Venetian province are not discovered within three days, he will be liable to dismissal from office and sent to Vienna under escort. His Majesty has been informed, apart from the Procurator-Inquisitor of Milan, of the state of people's minds in Milan. His Majesty is furious at the inactivity of the Milanese police and demands that urgent measures be taken to prevent lamentable occurrences—revolts and risings, which have taken place, fortunately, outside the possessions of His Apostolic Majesty, the most gracious Franz, King of Austria."

It was signed "Count Sedlnitzky, Minister of Police."

At the moment when Salvoti was making an ironical grimace as he read this dispatch, Beyle came out of the ground floor of Santa Margherita, reassured, but depressed by the grave news: what he had said to Métilde about his impending departure merely for the sake of seeing at least a light shadow of sorrow in her eyes (vain hope!) had suddenly become a sad necessity.

The polite but weary assistant of the Procurator, who saw Beyle for the first time and apparently had not had time to read the document lying before him, smoothed out the papers piled up on a couple of tables, asked him to take a seat and began to read.

Then, after a slight exclamation of "Ah, you're a Frenchman!" he said to him: "In the present state of alarm it is dangerous for foreigners to remain in Milan. You will do well if you carry out our respectful request and leave the capital of the province within twenty-four hours, reckoning from the time of the departure of the first mail-coach, that is, not later than five o'clock in the morning of 21st June."

The Procurator's assistant wrote the words "five o'clock 21st June" in ink in the corner of the document. Then, slightly covering his yawning mouth

with his hand and without looking at Beyle, he continued: "Show me your passport."

The copper seal clattered on the table; on Beyle's enormous passport, bespattered with inscriptions and coloured stamps, appeared a new green Austrian seal, in which were written the year, month and day and the places of examination, and that peculiar evasive sign by which the gendarmes at the various posts could recognize the genuineness of the document.

The assistant's tired eyelids opened slightly and he gave Beyle a penetrating faintly mocking look.

"I have no grounds for subjecting you to interrogation, as no serious accusations have been made against you. But the evidence of your passport is suspicious. Why have you visited so many places in the course of a month? Why did you need to move about so rapidly?"

"The doctors have ordered me to travel. I am suffering from arthritis."

"Yes, but you will agree that we cannot maintain a whole establishment of police in order to control the movement of every Frenchman who suffers from this disease. That is why the Chief suggests you travel outside the frontiers of the Lombardo-Venetian province. By the way, if it is not inconveniencing you, I will ask you to do me a small service."

"If you please," replied Beyle.

"You probably know all your fellow citizens living in Milan?"

"Unfortunately, I am not on friendly terms with my compatriots."

"That's a pity. I wanted to ask you whether you knew Baron Stendhal and a certain engineer Vismara."

"I've never heard of them," replied Beyle and felt a slight chill run down his spine.

"And who is Courier? He appears to be a French literary man, who came to Milan from Florence?"

"Yes, I've seen him. He was pointed out to me in a restaurant. But I don't know him," said Beyle.

"Well, forgive me for having troubled you. I wish you a good journey," said the Procurator's assistant; he nodded and five minutes later forgot about Beyle's existence.

In the morning of 20th June, 1821, Beyle twice went across the Piazza Belgiojoso. The death of Olivieri, that faithful friend and man of reckless courage, the terrible fate of Italy, the failure of all his hopes of intimacy with the only being he loved for the first time with all his heart—all this gripped his heart as in an iron vice. He walked as though in a delirium and stopped in the Cathedral Square by a shop window. Why had he stopped? In the shop window lay a pistol exactly like the one his hand had been involuntarily drawing whenever a pencil came into his fingers. Here was the only way out, now that all was lost and the bright and sunny days had departed and there was nothing but a travesty of time. The colour of time was changing: black predominated. Could it be that here too, as in France, the white colour of the Bourbons, which had given place to the bright red festival of revolution, would turn into black, and the darkness of the Church into the reactionary malice of crowned beasts? Life in the future appeared as a travesty of life. Therefore he must leave it. Firmly and resolutely he opened the door.

The assistant in the gun-shop shrugged his shoulders and said: "Since yesterday the free sale of weapons has been prohibited, but if the Signore is serving in the police . . .?"

"No, I'm not serving in the police," said Beyle and went out.

Perhaps he would make another attempt to go to the Piazza Belgiojoso?

It was a hot day. A merciless sun scorched the city, people and plants. The shutters of Métilde's windows were closed. The door was fastened tight. Something had happened. Beyle roused the porter, who informed him in a sleepy voice that the Signora had gone to the lakes with the Traversi family and would not return till the late autumn.

Next day at five o'clock in the morning Beyle took his seat in the coach. Three thousand five hundred francs were sewn up in his pocket. His nerves were trembling as from some sort of internal chill and he yawned for lack of air though the morning was fresh and the sun not yet blazing. "I must give up this nonsense. I am not a Werther to put a bullet into my head."

It was with these thoughts that he set out for the north.

At the first stop Paul-Louis Courier waved his hand from a carriage coming from the other direction.

"Where are you going to?" shouted Beyle.

"To Milan," replied Courier. "I must tell you that since the murder of the Duc de Berry it is impossible to breathe in France. The white terror has begun!"

Every moment of the journey to Como, Beyle decided he would leave the mail-coach at the first stop and go back. On the way to the blue lakes and green hills, on the way to the snowy Alpine foot-hills, he was conscious that he had left the town in which "life brought him close to death." He felt that he was leaving his soul there, that he was leaving his very life there; life was melting in him and leaving him with every turn of the wheels. He was dying with every step, he had not enough air. He felt that he would soon be incapable of thinking. Then followed an interval of ceaseless talk: he held long conversations with the postmen and seriously shared their concern about the price of wine. He discussed with them the reasons why the flask cost more than five centesimi. His only fear was to look inside his own mind. Thus he passed Airolo, Bellinzona, Lugano. The milestones with their inscriptions made him shudder: he thought with horror of France. By now he had lost all sense of the danger of staying in Milan. Riding on horseback up the St. Gothard road he paid no attention to the rules, and the guide remarked that even if the Signore did not value his own life, he should show some concern for the reputation of his guide, as the guide might be deprived of his livelihood if a traveller met with an accident.

Thus he went as far as Altdorf, where stood the monument to Wilhelm Tell. He was struck by the ugly way in which the sculptors had treated the Swiss hero.

"In the hands of people beautiful things become ugly. The base company in the Traversi drawing-room and the venomous stings of Milanese society have done the same thing to Métilde as the Swiss have done to the image of Tell. Métilde has become dull and tarnished. Paris will do the same to me after so many years of intense life, full of sorrow and happiness."

## CHAPTER TWENTY-SEVEN

SALVOTI HAD GOOD REASON TO SMILE IRONICALLY AS HE READ THE REPRIMAND he had received from Vienna. The list which that terrible bandit Olivieri,

who turned out to be a most dangerous Carbonaro, had tried to capture, provided him with an opportunity of gaining favour in the eyes of Vienna, in spite of the fact that Father Pavlovich had already forestalled him in one or two things and gone off to Vienna. In any case, if Italy had been turned into seething lava for a whole month, if the Carbonaro embers, smouldering underground, had suddenly set the whole Apennine peninsula on fire, they had not succeeded in doing this in Lombardy.

The Carbonaro hydra had been laid low with a sudden blow. The arrest of Silvio Pellico, Maroncelli, Borsieri, Tonelli, Arese, Castiglia and Trivulzio had been followed by one thousand seven hundred detentions, but Salvoti demanded the revelation of the leader. His name was not mentioned. And now the gendarme had brought from Turin a letter written by Confalonieri to Charles Albert. Here was this respected Milanese, a man with greying temples, so calm, loyal and respected by the Austrian authorities. Yet he turned out to be nothing but a liberal wretch, the most dangerous leader of the Carbonari and so self-assured that he had not even tried to save himself by taking to flight. They brought him in a black carriage through the rainy night and having bound his eyes, conducted him to the casemate of Santa Margherita.

A day later there was not a family in Milan which slept in peace. They made strong coffee, burnt letters, waited for a son who had been summoned to the Prefecture for interrogation, or for an old father, who had left the house at dawn and had not returned by one o'clock the next morning, they sorrowed for those who, to the jingling of the gendarmes' spurs, descended the stairs with bowed heads and entered the closed carriage. Cavalrymen were arrested in the barracks and, in cases of direct incriminating evidence, shot on the spot in the yard. And then at last: "A very dangerous man had been caught—a Frenchman, Baron Stendhal. Called himself Andrian. They'd found on him documents of the Communist Buonarotti, who preached the 'conspiracy of equals' of Gracchus Babeuf, the same Babeuf who was executed by the French in 1797, that most dangerous of dangerous men." Confalonieri, questioned as to which of the Frenchmen had talked to him about Babeuf, named only one Frenchman—*Henri Beyle*. Andrian was brought face to face with him in his cell. Confalonieri did not recognize him: "Only Beyle mentioned Buonarotti and Babeuf. I reject that dangerous doctrine. I don't agree with that Frenchman in anything. But this young man is not Beyle at all!"

Among other papers was the following document:

The Vienna police gave instructions "to arrest immediately the French citizen, the former commissaire des guerres, *Henri Beyle*, and demand of him that he reveal the whereabouts of the engineer who went to Turin under the name of *Domenico Vismara*, who has stayed in many towns of the peninsula with false passports, and has written books, prohibited by the police censorship under the pseudonym of *Baron Stendhal*. In view of the dangerous relations of this Liberal *Vismara* with the Carbonaro groups it is proposed, after the French citizen *Beyle* has been interrogated and confronted with *Domenico Vismara*, to inflict on *Vismara* the death penalty by hanging, the execution of the sentence to be subsequently reported in view of its confirmation at the suggestion of the Chancellor, *Prince Metternich*, by His Apostolic Majesty the Emperor of Austria on 22nd June, 1821."

Salvoti was annoyed by his failure with Andrian. He had long been on the track of the elusive *Vismara*. Now everything depended on his getting

hold of Henri Beyle as quickly as possible and obliging him to disclose Vismara's address. A quarter of an hour later the secretary reported to Salvoti that citizen Henri Beyle, the only man who knew the elusive Domenico Vismara, had left Milan on Salvoti's own instructions, having been given twenty-four hours' notice to quit the city, a week ago. Salvoti, losing his habitual self-control for the first time, swore outrageously.

The mines of Sicily, the wells of Mantua, the prisons of Verona, the "leads" of Venice and the vaults of the Palace of the Doges, deep under the water, were filled with tens of thousands of men who had not yet rebelled, but had been seized with the help of foreign arms.

Silvio Pellico as the closest secretary of Confalonieri was subjected to interrogation. Trivulzio, who, when he heard of his comrades' arrest, went to the police in a fright and was scared into betraying all the others, Andrian as a dangerous French conspirator, Confalonieri, at whose entry into the gloomy, black hall of Santa Margherita all stood up, including the gendarmes, and some two hundred other men were put through exhausting interrogations several times in the night by the light of torches.

A succession of inquisitors gave them no sleep. They were shaken by the shoulders, forced to stand and brought to the point of unconsciousness. Exhausted by this torture the prisoners of Santa Margherita were not always responsible for what they said. And if Salvoti failed to extract from them a direct admission that Federigo Confalonieri was the leader, indirectly they implied it by the respect with which they regarded Confalonieri every time he appeared in the court for cross-examination. Nobody called him a Carbonaro, but they said that "he was infinitely concerned about his country, that he had been the first to strive to promote its prosperity, even its external prosperity. He had formed a plan to light the streets by gas, he had put the first steamboats on the Italian rivers." But there were prisoners of weak character who told even more than Salvoti asked. In their despair they lost all self-respect and sank to the depths of degradation with no hope of advantage to themselves; their comrades were unable to influence them or to extend a helping hand, as all the prisoners were isolated.

Confalonieri's behaviour during the whole course of the examination was steady and fearless. Salvoti acted with caution with respect to him. Even to his Jesuitical mind it seemed incredible that a man, a Liberal it was true, but who had led too open a life with such broad interests, could embark on such a hellish conspiracy and go against the Emperor himself by secretly organizing a rebellion. The great wealth and respected position of Confalonieri's family in Lombardy, in the eyes of Salvoti, were the height of happiness and good fortune. This circumstance embarrassed the greedy Austrian Procurator more than anything else. His first words to Confalonieri were:

"I am obliged to ask your Excellency to give evidence in a matter which you could not possibly have had any connection with. You enjoy all the earthly advantages and the good graces of His Majesty's Government and cannot be an enemy of the Sovereign. Your fellow prisoners have disclosed that Count Porro, who has prudently escaped abroad, was at the head of the conspiracy. Tell me frankly your opinion of Count Porro."

"I must request you not to ask me any questions concerning Italians in general," replied Confalonieri. "I have longed and will go on longing for the freedom of Italy."

Sixty Carbonari had firmly declared that Count Porro was the leader of

the movement. The latter, who had got away in time, managed to get in touch with his friends and begged them to save Confalonieri, suggesting that on all dangerous occasions they should name himself instead of Confalonieri. But again two of the members—Pallavicini and Castilia—for some unknown reasons betrayed the whole organization. Then Salvoti believed it. The real leader of the Lombard Carbonari became the centre of attention of the examining authorities.

The examination went on for many months. Six hundred thousand young, strong and healthy men and women of Italy were subjected to interrogation, imprisonment and torture. At last the day came when all Milan waited for the sentence. The whole piazza in front of Santa Margherita was crowded. The ancient chapel, in which the Imperial Commissioner announced the sentence, was dark as usual; at the side of the cloth-covered table a huge fire, burning in the grate, lighted up with its red glow the Austrian uniform of the Imperial Commissioner. Carbonari stood in groups in the embrasures and niches of the vaulted chapel and greeted one another, while the keen eyes and attentive ears of the armed gendarmes did not miss a gesture or word of the prisoners. The Commissioner was turning over the piles of documents on the table. Everybody was waiting for Confalonieri to be brought in. Now the doors opened, and the tall stately figure of a comparatively young man with grey hair and enormous eyes in his pale face appeared in the chapel escorted by two gendarmes. Rapid, spasmodic words of enthusiastic greeting came quietly but distinctly from all sides. And even the Austrian Commissioner took a few steps towards the man. Then there was a dead silence. Seventeen Carbonari with Federigo Confalonieri at their head were deprived of their titles of nobility and property and sentenced to death by hanging. Eighty-seven men were sentenced to penal servitude, one hundred and seven to imprisonment for life in prisons outside of Italy. The sentence was subject to the Emperor's confirmation and was to be carried out within thirty days.

Silvio Pellico, Maroncelli, Andrian and a few others who were sentenced to death went up to Confalonieri and shook him by the hand.

The crowd in the piazza were yelling frantically: the red flag was raised and the Carmagnole was sung. Then there was a short volley, and dead silence descended. Milan was in mourning.

The relations of the condemned men received no information. In the night the closed carriages with the condemned men set out for the north, to the Moravian fortress of Spielberg, for the execution of sentence after the final examination. Confalonieri's aged father, after making the difficult journey to Vienna, implored Metternich to admit him to Schoenbrunn, where the Emperor was living. Hearing two young priests talking Latin in a small reception-room in Schoenbrunn Palace, the old man looked out of the window at the vast Schoenbrunn park and the mountains surrounding Vienna. Suddenly the talk in Latin ceased. In the room stood, rubbing his hands, a little old man with red eyelids, greyish-green, almost dove-grey hair, in a grey jacket, with the homely good-natured appearance of a male nurse at a military school. Going up to Confalonieri, he said rapidly: "I am glad to see you. The Prince told me that you wish to inform me of something."

Old Confalonieri then realized that the man in the grey jacket was Franz Hapsburg, the Emperor of Austria. His knees trembled. He staggered and nearly fell on to the carpet. A young priest supported him under the arm. Franz likewise hastened to take hold of his elbow and said: "Stand up, you're



told, stand up. And say what the matter is about. If the information is important, I may postpone your son's execution."

"Sire, I beg you to have mercy."

"And I beg you to have mercy on the rulers of Europe from the savage fury of such rascals as your son. If I had known that you were going to appeal on his behalf, I would not have given you an audience on any account. You have abused my confidence. If you are an honest Christian, you will offer your son as a sacrifice to divine justice. It will reconcile him with the earth, only the death penalty will open the way to paradise for him. Surely you don't desire the perdition of your own son?"

"See him, Sire, ask him yourself, you will see that he is not guilty."

"Yes, I will see your son, but not now. In the next room Father Pavlovich, the confessor of all the prisoners, is waiting for you. He will hear your confession, and afterwards you will have an interview with your son in the place that will be indicated to you, and you will order him, under the threat of his father's curse, not to conceal anything from the Emperor whom he has offended." Stamping his heels on the floor and jingling his spurs, Franz went out of the room.

The Carbonaro Confalonieri was brought to Vienna. He was informed that his life was spared. Instead of the death penalty he would be incarcerated for life in a Moravian prison and have to go to confession to a priest every week. Count Sednitzky informed him of what his father had not been able to tell him, having died on the return journey from Vienna to Milan.

The Minister of Police politely told the Carbonaro that he was to have the honour of seeing Prince Metternich, the State Chancellor.

Sednitzky himself took Confalonieri in an open sledge without escort to Schoenbrunn. In spite of the wintry day some of the windows of the palace were open; Metternich liked the cold. The Emperor's rooms were closed with shutters.

Sednitzky led Confalonieri into a small comfortable study with a fireplace and with statuettes of Sèvres porcelain on the writing-table. The blue hangings on the walls and the blue portière were caressing to the eyes. Confalonieri was too tired and exhausted to stand. But just as he was about to sit down, Metternich came in. Powdered, elegant and calm, he tried to make Confalonieri feel at home. He asked about his health, congratulated him and said that everything was being done for him.

"You may count on my good memory. I am firmly convinced that you, a nobleman, found yourself quite by accident in a movement, the consequences of which must be quite evident to you, as a reasonable man. I think you have already given up the childish illusion that human happiness depends on political freedom. Let's speak plainly: there smoulders in Europe a coal more dangerous than your Carbonaro coal. If it is not quenched everywhere with holy water it will flare up into a conflagration and reduce Europe to ashes. How could you, a scion of a most distinguished Lombard family, descend into this pit of miners, who are undermining the ground beneath the whole of Europe? Bear in mind that in opening the path to the government of the country to the Lombard bourgeoisie, you have not only betrayed the nobility, but given the keys of the door to revolutionary power to the most dangerous elements: you have stirred up the Italian rabble, forgetting that it will sweep away you and us in the first place, and then that circle of capable men for whom you ask representative participation in the Government after the Spanish model. We

are well acquainted with everything. From our heights we see far more than you do in the plain or your miners underground. I advise you to return to society and to help yourself and us in the serious business of saving Europe. This is neither a joke nor an illusion. The dark masses of the people must be kept in check and not let loose by Jacobin propaganda."

"The Prince seems to have forgotten that I am not a Jacobin, but I am nevertheless convinced that it is absolutely impossible to turn the future into the past."

"I understand you, Count. I desire for you personally and for your companions that the future may be easier than the past. This will be so without fail, if you agree to an absolutely confidential talk with the Sovereign, who is interested in the details of the revolutionary movement in your Northern Italy before and after the Neapolitan revolution."

Confalonieri rose to his feet so hastily that Metternich gaped with wide open eyes and throwing a rapid glance at the blue portière hanging over the doorway of the study, added quickly: "I must tell you that this information has now nothing more than an historical interest for the Sovereign, as we are sufficiently well acquainted with everything."

Confalonieri had already mastered his feelings and replied curtly: "Had it been the subject of your interest, Prince, I should not have been able to tell you. Everything has been effaced from my memory without trace; all that remains in it is pity for my own people."

Two gendarmes came in and placed shackles on Confalonieri's hands. Metternich looked at him with contempt, as at a mere criminal, and made a sign with his hand to the gendarmes, who led Confalonieri away.

The Emperor Franz came out from behind the blue portière.

All Italy was in mourning. The "friends of Margherita"—Austrian spies, gendarmes in uniform, in cassocks, in the dress of the common people, pried and operated everywhere. Hungry and greedy, laying information against one another, three of them plotting together in order to overthrow a fourth under the pretext of his lack of zeal, these "friends of Margherita" grabbed the Austrian pay, demanded money for the destruction of plots where none existed, and created sham conspiracies. Meanwhile the undiscovered Italian *ventas* led a really terrible and heroic existence. At Capua eleven "Venerables," the deputies of the principal associations of Carbonari, assembled to discuss the question of the future existence of their organizations. They strongly condemned their own detachment from the mass of the population and their confidence in the representatives of classes alien to the people. They strongly condemned Pallaricini and Castilia. Knowing that these men were in prison and could not be punished, they nevertheless condemned them to death. Then the eleven drew up a list of traitors and the most dangerous representatives of the clergy, who were to be punished with death. They dealt thoroughly with the question of penetrating all the Austrian organs with an intelligence service to counter "Santa Margherita" with the resolute and subtle work of the "Supreme Venta." There remained the last question. It had to be decided quickly. The conference of the eleven was for one day. The question was: where was the "Supreme Venta" to be? The decision was unanimous: in France. Who was to be the leader? The reply was: Bazard, the Socialist, who had preserved the Communist doctrine of Caius Gracchus Babeuf.

In the middle of September 1821 Byron wrote to Thomas More: "I am

in all the sweat, dust, and blasphemy of a universal packing of all my things, furniture, etc., for Pisa, whither I go for the winter. The cause has been the exile of my fellow Carbonics, and, amongst them, of the whole family of Madame G."

Having settled in the Palazzo Lanfranchi on the banks of the River Arno, Byron did not interrupt his relations with his friends. But he did not establish himself in the city for long. Contemplating a trip to Greece, where there was a revolt against the Turks, he was, as before, the subject of attention of the "friends of Margherita."

In the early spring of 1822, on returning from an excursion on horseback in the country, Byron, the young Carbonaro Gamba, the poet Shelley and two others were met at the gates of Pisa by an Austrian dragoon, who caught hold of Byron by his jack-boots, after he had bumped into him with his horse as though by accident, and then struck the groom with his whip. Byron's two servants seized the Austrian's horse by the reins. The dragoon pulled out his sabre, but a moment later fell as the result of a knife wound.

An hour later all Byron's servants were arrested, including his favourite the gondolier Tito.

Handfuls of gold opened the gates of the house of arrest, but at the demand of the authorities Byron was obliged to leave for Leghorn. His position as a peer of England and a member of the House of Lords failed to save him from being persecuted by the police. At Leghorn the servants were again involved in a sudden quarrel provoked by Gamba's new manservant. There was a knifing affray, which disturbed the whole street. Byron with a pair of pistols in his hands pacified the brawlers. But there was a big court case, as the result of which the only place where Byron was permitted to live in Italy was Genoa. The authorities politely warned him that he might any day put out to sea from this maritime city and never return to Italy. Genoa was the last Italian town in which Byron lived before his last journey. He saw beyond the boundaries of the port of Genoa an alien and terrible world, the winter of dead reaction, and only one point that was aglow with the dazzling fire of freedom-loving romanticism—the fields of Greece, on which a small nation strove to win its right to live.

In May 1823 Byron and Gamba read nothing but books about Italy. Gamba bought Baron Stendhal's *Rome, Naples et Florence*, which was the talk of the day, and opened it at the place where the author speaks of Byron, whom he had met and conversed with in Milan.

"I don't remember Stendhal," said Byron.

"Stendhal," replied Gamba, "is the same Beyle with whom you entered de Breme's box at the theatre and Confalonieri's Carbonaro lodge."

Next morning Byron wrote to Paris:

Sir,

Now that I know to whom I am indebted for the flattering mention of my name in *Rome, Naples et Florence en 1817, par M. de Stendhal*, it is proper that I should offer my thanks, agreeable or not, as they are worth, to M. Beyle, whose acquaintance I had the honour to make at Milan in 1816. You have done me too much honour by what you have said in this work; but what has given me as much pleasure as your eulogies was my learning by mere accident that I received them from a person whose esteem I was really anxious to acquire. So many changes have taken place in our

Milanese circle since that period, that I scarcely dare recall it to your memory. Death, exile and the Austrian prisons have separated those whom we loved. Poor Pellico ! I hope that in his cruel solitude the muse occasionally consoles him, that we may be charmed some day when the poet will be restored with her to liberty. . . . If you grant me the honour of an answer, be so good as to send it as soon as possible, because circumstances may take me again to Greece, although nothing is as yet decided on the subject. My present address is Genoa ; and in case of absence your letter would be sent after me.

I beg you to believe me, with a lively recollection of our short acquaintance and the hope of renewing it some day, your most obliged and obedient servant,

BYRON.

A year later Byron met his death at Missolonghi just before the opening of the attack against the Turks by the Greek detachment which he was leading.

During the night the Austrian police broke into the Palazzo Lanfranchi and raising the stone flags of the floor, discovered beneath them a big store of arms, left by Byron in consequence of his enforced departure.

In Spielberg the prisoner Kund organized the supply of paper and pens to the prisoners. Confalonieri constructed a secret hiding-place, in which were kept the most precious things—powders for sympathetic ink and paper.

From time to time Teresa Confalonieri received shapeless scraps of paper, which she covered with a damp cloth and ironed out. Red characters appeared, and she read her husband's letters. Sometimes whole packets of these scraps arrived ; she pieced them together, took great care of them, and read page after page with tears in her eyes. These were the notes of Silvio Pellico, which were the origin of his book *My Prisons*, published many years afterwards.

## PART THREE

### CHAPTER TWENTY-EIGHT

BEYLE'S HABIT OF CONVERSING WITH HIS FELLOW-TRAVELLERS CAME BACK TO him as soon as he entered the Lyons highway.

But it was no longer the simple, disinterested curiosity of previous years. His intervention in the conversation of two passengers who boarded the coach at Lyons was due altogether to a different consideration: he wanted to get some idea of present-day France, with which he was only acquainted by hearsay from the witty, but nevertheless none too convincing, letters of Mareste.

"Without work the ship of life is deprived of ballast and becomes unsteady," he thought. "But what work? What is the present France like? Will they give me any work?" All these questions particularly worried him when he listened to the conversation of the men from Lyons.

"For the number of factory chimneys," said one of them, "Lyons is almost the first town of France. Anyway, it has so many workers that they form the chief element of the population. That is the reason why terrible things happened there. In the three years after the famine year of 1817 whole families disappeared without trace; robberies, anonymous letters, extortions and daily attacks by masked men became more frequent. The police were powerless. But the cleverness of de Chabrol de Croussol, the Prefect of Lyons, made it possible to discover fairly quickly the criminals he needed. They were the best skilled workers of the textile factories of Lyons. Sentenced by the Cour Prévôtale, they were hanged in the square and guillotined in the prisons. Soon it was ascertained from the evidence of a whole series of witnesses that the majority of the Lyons workers were armed and that all the villages to the north and the south along the course of the Rhône were providing themselves with weapons. Searches, however, brought nothing to light. The bourgeoisie of Lyons thought it necessary to accuse the weavers. But as the armed band continued to run amok, the factory-owners of the town obliged the Prefect to appeal to the General Commissioner of Police—Senneville. They declared that the Lyons proletariat was a hotbed of crime. At the present time there are in France five police forces, which are hostile to one another, and as the General Commissioner directs the open police, he of course knows nothing. Old Marmont, Duke of Ragusa, was sent down, and he alone succeeded in finding out who were the organizers of these terrible happenings which were terrorizing Lyons. They turned out to be: General Canuel; Rossignol, an old counter-revolutionary of la Vendée; while the third was the Prefect of Lyons himself, de Chabrol de Croussol. Well, do what you like with such a company of Government officials," concluded the narrator, turning to his companion, who was as poorly dressed as himself.

"But it is to be hoped they were hanged," interjected Beyle.

The men from Lyons exchanged glances.

"Where do you come from?" they asked.

"From Geneva," replied Beyle cautiously. "I am a watch-maker there."

"You see, monsieur watch-maker, both of us served in the army twenty years ago and we can't get used to all these changes. As a Swiss, you of course

may not know, but we know quite well that there is a King, a Parliament and the King's brother, who wants to dissolve the Parliament. To tell the truth, we don't really need the Parliament, but neither do we need the nobles of the Comte d'Artois, the King's brother. And the Comte d'Artois, since Louvel killed the heir to the throne, is possessed by the idea of conspiracies. And where there is none, he orders them to be organized in order to frighten King Louis XVIII. You realize the trick? The whole Lyons gang was acquitted."

Beyle said nothing.

France bewildered him. Whereas in Italy the Austrian yoke created the impression of some sort of internal unity in the country, here the French Government itself was playing the part of oppressor.

It was with these gloomy thoughts that Beyle arrived in Paris.

He settled in room forty-seven in the Hotel de Bruxelles in the rue Richelieu, merely because he met there the manservant of his long-deceased friend Damas. To this man, whose name was Petit, he confided his money and property.

He wrote in his diary: "Paris impressions slip past or inspire me with contempt; all my thoughts are riveted to the stone flags of the Piazza Belgiojoso in Milan!"

His old friend Mareste, a man of thirty-six, rather deaf, wrinkled and purblind, was a caustic, keen and malicious conversationalist. He had grown up in Turin, where he had "picked up the inimitable malice of the Piedmontese," a complete distrust of fate and people and hatred of the Bourbons. All this drew him closer than ever to Beyle. It was only with Mareste that Beyle corresponded at the time of the Turin rebellion, of which he was a witness.

"To me the most repulsive of all is fat Louis XVIII with his ox-eyes. That clumsy cripple is drawn by eight horses. I encountered his carriage four times to-day," said Beyle to Mareste.

"He seems to be fairly kind-hearted. But doesn't he drive about Paris too frequently?" replied Mareste. "No doubt he is bored by the perpetual struggle with the Pavillon de Marsan."

"What is the Pavillon de Marsan?"

"It is the den of the Comte d'Artois. He lives there with his pack. He dreams of restoring the rights of primogeniture and the privileges of the nobility and of abolishing the Chambers. He prays a lot and makes hypocrites all over France. . . . But most of all he is busy exploiting the King's right to the arbitrary distribution of commissions in the army."

"Yes, I've heard about that. One hundred and fifty generals have already been put on the retired list and their places taken by all kinds of rogues from the suite of the Comte d'Artois. In that way he made sure of having his own cadres of officers in the army."

"Look here, Beyle, our visits to the Café de Rouen can no longer remain a secret. You must appear among your friends."

"I don't want to appear anywhere," replied Beyle. "It is enough for me to have your company and the dinners with Crozet and Colomb."

In the evening at the Grand Opera Beyle casually made the acquaintance of an American. In the foyer his new acquaintance asked him a good many questions about France, her literature and politics.

The American's questions served to confirm Beyle's own apprehensions.

On returning home at eleven o'clock (it was 29th December), Beyle put his feet on a foot-warmer and wrote a letter to the inspector for the collection of indirect taxes at Montbrison in Loire. He wrote till late in the night and was

amused with his strange letter, in which his conversation with the American was repeated with stenographic precision. The dialogue ended with the American asking whether it would be possible for him to hear the famous Chateaubriand in the Chamber of Peers. "That is quite impossible," I replied (wrote Beyle). "As the Government is afraid lest the Chamber of Peers may have too great an influence on public opinion, the meetings of that high institution and the speeches delivered there are kept a very close secret. . . . You see from our exchange of opinions, my dear friend, the pitiful condition of French literature. And this at a time when in neighbouring England eight poets are living and writing, and in Italy people take pride in the names of Monti, Manzoni, Pellico and . . . Foscolo!"

As he fell asleep, Beyle thought of how he was unable to cross the threshold of the house in which everything was full of memories of his youthful days and of Napoleon—the threshold of the Daru house. In the morning he was roused at ten o'clock by a knock on the door.

Colomb and Mareste came in.

"Well, then, there's no need to send this letter as you have come," said Beyle, addressing Colomb.

While he was dressing, the visitors laughed loudly and made fun of every sentence of the dialogue with the American.

Beyle paid little attention to their jokes. He wanted to eat.

They went to the Café de Rouen.

Having had a cup of coffee with a couple of brioches, Beyle and his friends went to the journalist Lingay, about whom there had been some talk in the café. They found Lingay at work with a young man in a grey jacket, dull eyes and a big nose.

"Who is that repulsive creature?" asked Beyle.

"He is a young lawyer, the son of the artist Mérimée."

Beyle looked at the young man sneeringly. Mérimée rose, said "How d'you do?" coldly and slightly raising his eyebrows, gave Beyle a long, hostile look. Lingay was reading his newspaper article, written at the order of the Minister Montmorency. Brilliant and enthusiastic, it was championing some absolutely fantastic idea.

Glancing at the visitors, Lingay turned to Mérimée. "There's your second lesson in rhetoric," he said. "If you want to be really clever, you must know how to write exactly from the opposite point of view, but with the same brilliance and persuasiveness."

So saying, he picked up a sheet of paper and read out an equally eloquent refutation of his own article. Finishing the last sentence impressively, he tossed the paper on to the table and said: "And that has been ordered by the Minister Corbière for another newspaper. Thus we create the public opinion of France. The worst of all," he said, turning to Mérimée, "is that I believe both articles."

"More likely you don't believe either," said Mérimée. "I respect in you this contempt for the duties of a citizen, dear teacher."

Lingay read the article; Mareste laughed, while Colomb looked on aghast.

"But I think," remarked Beyle calmly, "that Lingay believes both articles. I don't remember how many years ago he fought two duels in a week on account of two women. He believed both, and both of them believed him."

Lingay gave Beyle a look of gratitude.

"It must be admitted that exercises in rhetoric have their uses, especially for my pupil in particular." He waved his hand in the direction of Mérimée.

"If rhetoric did not provide a distraction, the journalist who takes his work seriously would have to hang himself or change his profession, which is sometimes much more difficult than putting your neck into a noose. If I were offered the post of the present Premier, I wouldn't accept. Do you know what Girardin, an insignificant deputy and mediocre journalist, did to the powerful Premier recently?"

Without waiting for questions, he continued: "In his capacity as Prime Minister, Villèle introduced in the Chamber an exceedingly rigorous Bill on the Press. The journalist, Girardin, a deputy, mounted the tribune and made a fiery speech against the Bill. His eloquence did not appeal to anybody. The Right shouted: 'Enough!' The speech was a failure. Only Villèle in the Ministerial box was uneasy, evidently not feeling well. At last Girardin raised his hand and shouted to the whole Chamber: 'But have respect for the Premier! I am reading word for word his own speech of 1817. I have not added anything of my own.' There was a hubbub in the Chamber, and to roars of laughter from members of the Left and Centre parties, the Premier left his box. No, it is better to be a journalist, anyway!"

Lingay's story made everybody laugh, especially Mareste. His pointed little beard shook with laughter, he made incoherent exclamations and spluttered. Then, turning to Beyle, he said: "You must get used to it, old chap. This is not Milan. We are living in a *constitutional* country."

"Yes, in this constitutional country I'm beginning to feel the same aversion to politics that I used to feel towards religion."

Mareste turned round and taking him by the elbow, said: "Gentlemen, take a good look at him! He hates religion and despises politics. And yet I have precise information that when he arrived in Grenoble from his vaunted Milan five years ago, it was precisely Beyle who carried on a furious agitation in Grenoble and literally dragged the Abbé Grégoire into the Chamber. There's his religion and politics! The Abbé Grégoire was elected—if you please—for the département of Isère! Bear in mind, dear friend, that in certain Paris salons they haven't yet forgiven you for this."

"I have no intention of frequenting drawing-rooms. As for old Grégoire, religion has nothing to do with it. You must remember that Grégoire was a member of the Convention and that he was the first to demand the arrest of Louis XVI in 1792."

"That's just what I say," said Mareste, interrupting Beyle. "If religion has nothing to do with it, politics are of great importance. I fully admit the idea that you are unaware of all the consequences. The most complaisant Chamber in the world refused to admit Grégoire into its midst, having no juridical right to deprive him of his right as a deputy. And the King regards the assembly itself as a great insult to himself."

Beyle shrugged his shoulders.

"I don't understand what you are driving at, Mareste."

"That you shouldn't put on a mask."

"I don't see the logic of that," retorted Beyle.

The conversation then broke off. Mérimée looked at Beyle with the greatest curiosity.

Beyle thought the look was rather bold and turned his back to his new acquaintance.

A minute later Beyle said: "Anyway, I don't understand what is going on here. And who is this person Barrot, with whom Colomb has acquainted me?"



He is absolutely devoid of imagination. In stock-exchange matters he is like a fish in water. He makes fun of titles and nobility, he is convinced, as he himself expresses it, that the time of unlimited opportunities for capable men has arrived. In what are his capacities manifested? In the ability to buy up stocks and shares?"

"Any banker does that," interposed Colomb, "and Barrot has a banking office at Lunéville. It isn't possible for everybody to be engaged in literature, music and painting. Somebody must accumulate capital. Barrot is the new man of the new France."

"I congratulate the new France, if her new man is such a brute," said Beyle angrily. "There is not the least doubt that under the guise of all these constitutions, Chambers of deputies and public opinion the power of the bourgeoisie is being established."

"I don't think so," suddenly said Mérimée. "I am sure that in a few years' time the aristocracy will break the neck of the bourgeoisie."

"And I am sure that its power will be definitely strengthened," replied Beyle. "Everything will again be in the hands of the prosperous thousand persons, for whom the purpose of life will be money, profits, the stock exchange, and all amusements will boil down to gay evenings and nights in rats' holes."

"That's a good name for the coulisses of the ballet and for the dens of danseuses," said Lingay. "But there won't be enough theatres. You'll have to increase the number of Paris brothels."

"They are both rather expensive," retorted Mareste testily. "For that reason I intend to get married within three days."

"Is that a joke?" asked Lingay.

"No, it is not a joke! If I don't, my old mother will leave all her property to the Church."

"I didn't know you were so mercenary," remarked Beyle resentfully.

"You talk like that simply because you haven't a penny to bless yourself with," replied Mareste testily.

Beyle did not say a word. The whole evening he did not renew the conversation with Mareste.

Next morning Mareste waited in vain for him at the Café de Rouen. Beyle did not come. Mareste read all the newspapers, glanced at the clock a number of times, shrugged his shoulders and went away. Beyle sat alone in the Café Lemblin, drinking coffee and reading the newspapers. "In Italy," he thought, "poverty is not regarded as a crime, and money adds nothing to a man in the eyes of the society of the lively and interesting people who surrounded me there."

He took out his note-book and began to reckon up his expenses since the day of his arrival in Paris. The note-book was an old Parisian one that had long been in use. In looking through the expenditure, Beyle suddenly realized that the item of special expenditure on women had dropped out. He had been so much immersed in the sea of his Italian impressions during the past four years that he had not noticed this great change in himself. His other expenditure was also not very great. The chief item was the theatre and books.

"Can one be content with oneself?" Beyle wondered and decided that he ought not to change his mode of life. He was unable and unwilling to do anything to get money.

The abstinence to which he had grown accustomed in Milan and which he first became aware of on returning to Paris made him laugh.

At the time when Mareste was waiting for Beyle and looking at the clock, the latter was experiencing an unusual sense of loneliness, but he had not the slightest desire to see Mareste. He left the Café Lemblin, went through the Tuileries and walked along the quays, stopping at every dealer in engravings. A feeling of deep despair took possession of him beneath the big chestnut trees of the Tuileries gardens. Disgusted with his entire surroundings, he said aloud in reply to his thoughts of Métilde: "Since I'm unable to forget her, the best way out is suicide."

A pedestrian who overtook him looked at him in surprise. To let him pass, Beyle pretended not to be able to get his handkerchief out of his frock-coat and halted. Together with the handkerchief a ticket in the name of Baron Mareste permitting the bearer to visit the museum of the Louvre gratis fell out on to the sandy path. "That's where I must spend the day!" exclaimed Beyle delighted and went into the Louvre.

The long galleries with the finest works of the Italian painters made him think of his visits to the Brera in Milan. Paris was completely forgotten among the magnificent pictures and statues. Here at last was a copy of the picture "Herodias" of the school of Leonardo. Beyle's face changed and, standing in front of the picture, he was aware of that strange state when one is simultaneously overwhelmed with a sensation of melancholy and delight. It was hard to tear himself away from the picture.

The hot dust of Paris enveloped him. Again as he walked along the quay and bought English editions of Shakespeare in small volumes, he met the gaze of a man who was looking out of a carriage drawn by six horses. A fat flabby face and foolish ox-eyes. The King of France passed by unnoticed by the Parisians. The pedestrians did not even turn their heads. The horses slowly drew the carriage.

"What boredom!" thought Beyle. "Probably that ox, looking at my Italian butcher's head, thinks of me as unflatteringly as I do of him. So much the better!"

Crossing the road and flinging out his arms, Martial Daru blocked Beyle's path.

"Can one hide like this? Let's go to my place at once. You haven't once been to see us. Your friend Philippe is dining with us to-day."

"Well, if Philippe de Ségur is dining with you, permit me to come another time. I dined several times with Philippe de Ségur at the Emperor's work-table. Philippe couldn't talk of anything then except his thirty wounds. He is really a brave creature. But if he was a hero in Russia, that Asiatic country, is it possible that in Paris you fail to realize all his baseness?"

"In what does his baseness consist?" asked Martial. "Anyway, think as you will. Philippe has written some very interesting memoirs about the campaign in Russia and is about to publish them."

"That alone tells you of his baseness. To publish anything about Napoleon while the Bourbons are in power means that one commits a forgery. What can he say that is sincere and honest about the Russian campaign without humouring the Bourbons? I say that Philippe is a scoundrel and is only publishing the book in order to get a blue ribbon from Louis XVIII. I'll come and see you, Martial, and fairly soon. Give my regards to the Count and Countess."

So saying, Beyle quickly passed over to the other side. The Louvre picture hovered before his eyes. Firmly and without hesitation he resolved to set out for London next morning.

On returning to the hotel, he thought that he had treated Martial curtly. But if he had met anybody else, he would have been just as curt: the image of Mélite left him every time somebody stopped him on his way. Every encounter in the street that interrupted the flow of his thoughts brought on a fit of fury. And as his thoughts were far away from Paris, every Paris encounter filled him with resentment. It was in this state of mind that he entered the small but tastefully furnished room in the Hotel de Bruxelles.

The former servant, now the proprietor of an hotel, Petit, had re-decorated Beyle's abode. There were books, albums of views of Rome, a Florentine edition of Piranesi, and on the walls engravings. A huge writing-table covered with a crimson cloth was littered with manuscripts. On a leather armchair and on the floor near the leather divan, above which was a shelf with Tanagra statuettes, lay the huge volumes of a Dutch translation of *A Thousand and One Nights*. On the window-sill were piles of thin paper, theatre bills of Italian concerts, programmes written all over in pencil, notes on the happenings in Naples jotted down under the immediate impression of Colonel Scotti's accounts and alternating with reflections on love. As a large number of these reflections had accumulated, Beyle had decided to work them into a treatise. Glancing around, he went up to the writing-table and was delighted to observe that the work was three-quarters finished.

"One may get inspired ideas abroad, but it is only in France that one can write a book. I am convinced of that," he whispered to himself, and going from one end of the room to the other, sat down to work, having decided that the best business he could find for himself in France was *to create a book*.

Returning to his ideas of 1814, when on his arrival in Paris from Russia he had resumed his work on the *History of Painting*, he made a promise to himself to work every day. The goose quill began to creak and he wrote in large letters the Latin sentence, "Nulla dies sine linea"—"Not a day without a line"—and hung the sheet of paper up over his writing-table as a reminder.

At five o'clock there were three taps on the door. He glanced at the clock: they were calling him to the table d'hôte. He took his seat. A moment later, with a malicious smile and chuckling to himself, Mareste came into the room and looked with curiosity at Beyle.

"I have already been making inquiries about your health. Why didn't you come to the 'Rouen'?"

"I was at the Café Lemblin."

"Is that so? In that den of conspirators and dangerous Liberals?<sup>1</sup> I congratulate you!"

Five or six men, lowering their newspapers and interrupting their reading for a moment, glanced at Mareste. These "five or six," as persons "without definite occupation," were marked with the special stamp of hotel inhabitants. Nobody took any interest in them or their visitors, but Beyle had managed to find out that they could be trusted and that in reality they had very definite occupations. This opinion was subsequently confirmed by their participation in the barricades of 1830. Beyle calmly replied to Mareste: "Thank you for your congratulations."

<sup>1</sup> At the beginning of last century the term "Liberal" was equivalent to the modern "Revolutionary."

## CHAPTER TWENTY-NINE

THE TIPS OF THE FLAGS CRACKLED LIKE THOUSANDS OF WHIPS. THE MOORING cables were strained to the utmost. On the landing-stage the lamps burnt dimly; thick, heavy rain was falling. It was late in the night at Calais. The waves were breaking on the shore with a roar, flashes of lightning lit up the sky, the wind whistled and howled without a break. Its melancholy clamour seemed to fill all space.

The air was damp and heavy.

That night Beyle and his companion, Edwards, an ex-commissaire des guerres, sought in vain in the darkness among the forest of masts on the vast landing-stage for a narrow passage in order to reach the small, clumsy steamer with huge paddle-wheels at its sides, which had recently begun the transport of passengers from the French shore to England and back across the Channel.

They went on searching for a whole hour.

"It seems," said the Englishman Edwards, "that only in the Russian language can one swear properly at this weather and the fruitless search for our boat."

Beyle said nothing and shivered: a trickle of cold water ran from his collar down his back. The wind wrenched the umbrella from his hand and knocked him off his feet.

Picking up his dirty bag out of a pool of water, he could hardly restrain himself from swearing.

His head ached, he felt pains all over his body. Yesterday in the disgusting, filthy hotel where they had arrived in the coach, Beyle and Edwards, both in a state of intoxication, had had words with an English officer, who called them "liars." This morning they learned that the man who had insulted them had gone away.

Edwards had grumbled that they had not taken their revenge. Beyle had said to him drowsily that they would find the captain at Dover and challenge him to a duel. But what the quarrel was about, Beyle could not remember. Ah yes, that was it: Edwards was telling them about something that had happened in London, in Cato Street, where all the Ministers of England were gathered together at a secret meeting. The Manchester battles with the workers had just taken place.

"It is a strange thing," said Edwards. "These factory owners glut the market with goods without considering in the least whether they are needed, and they are tremendously interested in the new machinery that takes the place of the living worker. And as soon as they got rid of their superfluous workers, the Manchester affair began. Take, for instance, the Cato Street affair. The Carbonaro Thistlewood, like the Italians you've been telling us about, and thirty other desperadoes like himself, got to know about the secret meeting of the Ministers in a private house and resolved to twist their necks like chickens."

"And those scoundrels paid for it with their heads," suddenly spoke a rough voice from the other end of the table.

The speaker was an English captain.

"They were all executed," he continued, staring at Edwards, who remained silent. "And our King George IV travels quite peacefully about Scotland and Ireland and is met with ovations everywhere."

"He wears national costumes quite well, our elegant old gentleman, and I don't want to say anything against the King," said Edwards, pouring out beer

for himself. "I will only say that last year, with the death of George III, the conciliatory policy of the Whigs died as well. Our constitution is reduced to absurdity. Whose fault is it that the operation of Habeas Corpus has been suspended? The fault of the Tory Ministry! You arrest at random without bringing a charge within three days!"

Beyle, who had drunk so much that his head was in a whirl from the unaccustomed beverage, entirely forgot himself and frankly expressed his opinion of the hypocrisy of English society:

"Your George IV assumed the Crown of England, and meanwhile his wife was not alone when living in Naples. You are aware, of course that when she turned up in London last year to put forward her claims to the Crown, George IV lodged a complaint with the House of Lords, accusing his wife of prostitution. Perhaps the Captain will tell us why London, which met Caroline with cheers, now acclaims her ex-husband, why George persecutes the greatest poet of England, why the same London ruins Lord Byron's life by turning his divorce case into a political event? Because English hypocrisy forgives everything to a crowned quadruped and forgives nothing to a freedom-loving poet."

Then the shouting began: "That's a pack of lies" and "It is not worth while talking to liars." The Captain got up and staggered out of the room before Beyle and Edwards realized the full offensiveness of his words.

The wind whistled and blustered in their ears. It was slippery underfoot and they had no desire to talk because they had to shout. The slanting stream of rain beat in their faces. Beyle wanted to go back, but Edwards insisted on going on with the search. At last a flash of lightning revealed the steamer. Her black hull with its tall funnel and low masts was quite close. A sailor took the baggage and led the travellers on board the ship. Somewhere not far away the anchor chains were creaking. In the half-darkness of the deck they could see passengers lying about in bunches with their heads on boxes, sacks and bundles. At the risk of treading on somebody's face, Beyle, feeling ill and soaked to the skin, made his way unsteadily to a cabin on the upper deck. By the light of a hanging lamp they changed their clothes and asked for some cognac, tea and red wine. Edwards had it all brewed together and gave the beverage to his companion to drink. Edwards's curly fair hair was stuck to his brow and his blue eyes twinkled, although he was in a bad temper. Beyle wanted to sleep, but Edwards, clenching his fists, kept saying that he would have to "find that beast of a captain" and give him a drubbing at all costs. To the accompaniment of this growling, which gradually grew less and less, Beyle fell asleep.

It was their third day in London. Ah, how remote were the Milanese days and nights of the Carbonaro Beyle! In the day-time they took walks about the town and visited the British Museum, which was expecting the arrival of Lord Elgin's ships with the marbles stolen in Greece. In the evening the cursed, tiresome Edwards dragged Beyle round the pot-houses and taverns of London. "Ennui and desperation were the cause of this journey!" The fog thickened on the Thames, the cables, rolled up in pyramids, smelt of the sea. Fish scales lay in piles on the shore. In a tavern by the lamp that gleamed dimly with a greenish-yellow light in the mist, Edwards found the Captain and whispered to Beyle, who had already drunk more than he could carry: "Here he is at last!"

"Who's he?" asked Beyle.

"There he is, your enemy ! Go and challenge him. I'm your second."

It was terrible ! Beyle had never been a coward, but now his hair quivered on his head and his arms were numbed up to the elbows. He did not feel any malice towards the Captain. To go up and insult a man who had muttered something in a state of drunkenness seemed to him to be barbarous and senseless. The Captain came straight towards them, but two paces away Edwards and Beyle—the one with delight, the other with annoyance—realized the mistake. The officer was a complete stranger to them.

Beyle could not remember whether it was he or Mareste who uttered the excellent phrase: "Bad taste leads to crime."

A brawl with the Captain would certainly be in bad taste. "Edwards is a man of bad taste. Our ways are parting," thought Beyle. "The only thing to do is to hasten the parting."

Beyle went off to Richmond. "It was, of course, annoying," as during these days he might miss the opening performance of a Shakespearcan tragedy with the great Kean in the leading part, and to tell the truth this was the chief delight that attracted him to London.

Richmond completely captivated him. The view from the hill stretched over green meadows and vast fields with gigantic trees.

He thought what a wicked mutilation of the landscape it would be to cut down those trees. Yet in France, since the bourgeoisie had attained power, the trees were being felled everywhere. The views of Richmond and Windsor reminded Beyle of his beloved Lombardy, the hills of Brianza, Como, Cadenabbia—a beautiful country, where he had spent his best days. He again felt that state of "happiness, recklessly enjoyed," as he was fond of expressing it, catching in the air of this locality the particles of some sort of strange, fiery substance. In breathing this air, he felt younger, the blood coursed more rapidly through his veins, his eyes sparkled and his mind functioned with unusual alertness. An even warmth coursed through his whole body.

With the setting of the sun, shining white, infinitely distant clouds gleamed above the locality. In the day-time the trees and grass blazed with green fire in the gentle, bright and joyful sunshine. Everything seemed to be filled with light.

Two days later, coming out of an oak wood and gazing at the ploughed fields stretching at the foot of the hill, Beyle suddenly realized that in the air of Richmond, that so resembled Lombardy, the image of *Métilde* had completely dissolved and faded out of life. Was it possible that on the journey from Milan Cathedral to the Tower of London he had got rid of his sufferings ? The idea filled him with a strange mixture of pleasure and sadness.

He had gone to England with the idea of curing himself of the disease of love, and when he realized the success of the cure he regretted the disease.

Later on, in the evening, sitting on the stones of the old bridge that descends to the lower part of the Richmond terrace and reading *The Memoirs of Mrs. Hutchinson*, Beyle heard someone greet him in Italian. He turned round. A man in a blue frock-coat, red jack-boots without heels and with a whip in his hand came towards him. A sorrel horse with a saddle neighed beside the fence of a cottage not far away. Beyle sprang to his feet: before him stood Berchet—the Neapolitan exile, Carbonaro and poet, who had not belonged to *select* society, but had been the friend of several English families living in Milan.

"Have you seen Lady Jersey ?" was Berchet's first question.

"No," replied Beyle. "I haven't seen her and don't intend to see her. I

know that people who have crossed the Channel forget all about those whom they met on the Continent."

"What a strange idea ! But have you seen at least Hobhouse or Brougham ?"

"You know, Berchet, my pleasure at a cordial reception by these people would not outweigh my chagrin at a cold one, or if they cut me outright."

"You're wrong to talk like that," said Berchet. "Even if you have become stand-offish, there is no reason to fear that here in England they will appraise you according to the recommendations of Baron Binder and the Milan police."

"But I've heard that things are happening in England which go far beyond the arbitrary work of the Austrian police in Milan."

"You are thinking of the Manchester butchery ?" asked Berchet.

"Precisely," said Beyle.

"But a thing like that could never have occurred in Italy. We have not as yet so many factories as they have here. Even the silk factory in Florence was set up by a Russian—Anatoly Demidov. Don't be more severe on English society than on the French. But what are we standing here for ? Come along to my place."

They went into a little house with a red-tiled roof.

"I've just been for a ride," said Berchet. "Let's have some tea."

"Thank you very much. I should never have said that an Italian could get used to this terrible English brew."

"Don't they drink tea in France ?" asked Berchet.

"Very seldom, and then only in Anglomane households," replied Beyle.

"But what have you to say about French society generally ? Why did you shrug your shoulders so disdainfully when I mentioned the subject ?"

"Well, if we can speak freely, I will tell you that I am disgusted with the old, rotten world, which is now seeping through the wrappings of the new age, as marsh water soaks through a layer of fresh turf. The aristocracy raves about its bygone splendour, demands the restoration of its estates and privileges, dreams of destroying the constitution and reinstates the most barbarous and absurd superstitions. I recently listened to Joseph de Maistre. That Jesuit rogue preaches with the greatest eloquence a fraud in which he himself does not believe. At a time when experiments are being made in the laboratories in decomposing water into gaseous substances, that blockhead and sharper tries to prove, in the society of serious people, that if the priest gives a man a piece of white dough to eat, it purifies the man's conscience. The State is taking hold of everything. Women have become pious. They regard Byron as the offspring of Satan and spread the nets of mystical philosophy before the young men in their salons. At times this experiment ends in advantageous marriages and a good post for the convert. Most often nothing comes of it except dreadful boredom and hypocrisy. You open your arms to a beauty and before answering you she invites you to kiss devoutly the diamond cross hanging round her neck and gives herself to you with her hands folded in prayer and her eyes raised to heaven."

"How frightful !" said Berchet. "The one good thing in England is that the police don't allow the Jesuits to enter, until they have invented a way of flying across the Channel on angels' wings."

"Yes, but you forget that Jesuits are only impossible in a society that is not inclined to produce them. The whole of France is permeated with falsehood, and a man who dreams of making rational use of his energy is bound to be unhappy there."

"Well, but what about yourself? What are you doing in Paris?"

"I have been seized with a new literary spasm, but I'm not counting on any success. Having returned after seven years of wandering, I see that it is impossible to achieve success in France without debasing oneself and toadying to the newspapers. I suppose one must pander to baseness right up to the prime minister; meanwhile, I keep away from it."

"How sarcastic you are!" said Berchet, sinking his chin into his neck-tie so that the pointed white tips of his collar grazed his cheeks and hid his small black side-whiskers. His broad blue coat-collar jutting out beyond the lapels made him look quite hunch-backed. Beyle's remarks upset him considerably.

"What can I write?" Beyle continued. "I have prepared for the press a book which is quite inadmissible from the point of view of form. It is a treatise on love. A splendid target for fools. What can present-day French society say about it? That the book suffers from egotism, that its form is inconvenient as the author speaks everywhere of 'I.' A new race of men, whom Delécluze recently called 'Belles-letttristes,' will cry out that my book is not a novel, and that one may talk about love only in novels. Of course, my precise scientific description of the special kind of madness called love cannot have any success in France. This madness is encountered more and more rarely in our country. At last a new man has sprung up in France: the banker, the factory owner, the respected industrialist, that is to say, a man with the most positive ideas. Of course, this new man will not waste time on such things as my book. Spending his days settling his accounts with his two thousand workmen, the millionaire industrialist vaguely realizes only one thing: that I have more respect for living thought than for money bags."

"Yes, but if there were millionaire industrialists in Italy, we'd have driven out the Austrians long ago. And now—do you know the latest news? Italy was crushed before the armed detachments succeeded in occupying the towns. You know that the Austrian prisons are full, that the finest people of Italy are in them. You know that the Carignan cur—Charles Albert—turned out to be an abominable traitor; he fled like a coward instead of marching to Milan from Piedmont. I recently received a letter about it. Similar letters have also been received by the exiles living in terrible poverty in London—Rossetti, Mazzini and Foscolo."

"Foscolo?" exclaimed Beyle.

"Yes, Foscolo," repeated Berchet. "Foscolo received a letter from Métilde Viscontini after Salvoti had submitted her to prison interrogation."

Beyle went slightly pale.

"Well, what happened?" he asked.

"She answered him coolly and refused to give anybody's name."

"She asked me to give her greetings to her friends," said Beyle. And taking out a little note sewn up in oil-cloth, he gave it to Berchet, feeling that the last threads connecting him with Milan were being broken.

Berchet held the letter in the palm of his hand and said: "And if fate had not brought us to Richmond, would this letter have travelled about with you another whole month?"

"No, one way or another, I'd have found a means of delivering it to Foscolo, although you understand, of course, the difficulty of my position."

"What does the difficulty consist in?"

Beyle reflected a while and resolved to take refuge in the pretence of fear.

"I don't know how the international police are working here at present.



My acquaintance with La Fayette is known to everybody. I'm not sure they are not keeping a watch on me."

"But I am sure that they are not keeping a watch on La Fayette. He is very old. Apparently all his revolutionary ardour has vanished."

"But I can tell you that not only his revolutionary ardour but also every other ardour of his makes itself felt in Paris."

Berchet smiled, but remembering the sufferings of his friends in the Austrian prisons, he felt sad.

The fact that his companion was reconciled to the English police annoyed Beyle. He was possessed by that usual feeling which made it impossible for him to distinguish between a criminal and a bore. Berchet had become incredibly boring to him. He hastily and brusquely said good-bye and went away.

Accompanying him to the door, Berchet said: "I'm surprised that knowing La Fayette and many interesting Parisians, you don't make better use of your visit to England. You could dine twice a week at Lord Holland's and other no less remarkable people if you wanted to."

"*Au revoir*," replied Beyle. "I didn't even tell anybody in Paris that I was going to London. I had only one purpose, and that was to see Shakespeare on the stage."

"*Au revoir*. Kean is playing Othello the day after to-morrow. I wish you the greatest pleasure," Berchet called after him as he left.

On the return journey to London Beyle wrote in the margins of *The Memoirs of Mrs. Hutchinson* the following phrase: "Berchet questioned me in detail about France. Young men of the petty bourgeoisie like him are well educated but don't know what to do with themselves, as everywhere the way is blocked by the protégés of the Jesuit congregation. In the end they will break up the congregation and at the first opportunity overthrow the Bourbons. This is like a prophecy, and anyone who reads my words may not believe me."

In London, Mareste and Barrot awaited him. They had been at great pains to find him with the help of the English banker who had remitted money to him in England.

They shared their impressions and walked along the Thames, admiring the little houses with rustic gardens in which the autumn roses were in bloom. They visited factories and works, and at Beyle's insistence inspected the new looms and machines.

Beyle made comments on the new race of people who spent ten hours a day at the machine keeping constant watch on the flitting to and fro of the shuttle. He was impressed by the size of these factories, which flooded whole countries and towns with goods. The little factories of Paris could not be compared with them. The Lyons factory-owners tried frantically to compete with them; as for Italy, the country where Beyle had wandered for seven years—Italy had nothing remotely resembling them.

The persistent hard labour of the English workers seemed to Beyle like a nightmare. Mareste took up his brief remarks and tried to parry them. Standing beside a machine and shouting above the noise, he said in French: "This is something that France does not yet know. This is how England is paying us for four coalitions and Waterloo."

"*This is what will bring about an explosion and catastrophe in France in 1870*," Beyle replied to him in the same tone.

"Henri likes to dabble in figures, like an imbecile," said Barrot, laughing.

"I assure you that in ten years' time you'll remember my words. The Italian is happier because of his light-heartedness and the facility with which he endures poverty, but the northerners are going to cover huge territories with factory chimneys in the next few years. It is hard to say what will be the result of this new army of slaves, which Egypt and the Roman Empire did not know."

They returned to dine at the hotel, where Mareste and Barrot had been given tiny little attic rooms. They met in the large, high dining-room. The huge table supported vast joints of roast meat and long, thin, sharp knives. Each man went up to the joint, cut some meat off for himself and ate as much as he liked, paying two shillings at the desk.

"One must finish cooking these raw slices in one's stomach," said Mareste after dinner. "The English do it by drinking strong tea, but I prefer Scotch whisky."

Beyle refused to drink and leaving his companions, went off to the theatre. He was so carried away by Kean's acting that he lost all sense of time.

For Beyle time had always one of three colours—it was black, red or white. The great actor carried him away from this world to a time when the hours were red.

Kean's astonishing tragic genius was strangely out of keeping with the stories which Beyle had heard about him. He was a reckless, fast liver, haunting taverns and night-cellars, who was completely transformed the moment he appeared on the stage. His acting stirred the emotions, awakening the noblest feelings and the best thoughts.

Time vanished. It melted away as it does during a serious illness or in days of great happiness.

Beyle wrote in his diary: "Between the days at Milan and my present state has arisen the series of Shakespeare's tragedies.

"I am getting better, but I regret my sickness."

At a ball at Almack's Club, Beyle saw his banker, to whom Colomb had forwarded the money collected at Grenoble.

"Monsieur Beyle, your money arrived to-day. You'll get a notice to-morrow. Very glad to meet you here. You got in here at once, but I have been working twenty-two years to go to this ball."

Beyle had in fact received by chance an invitation to the ball at the aristocratic club, where the representatives of other classes were not admitted. Beyle laughed as he thought of the incredible barriers which had not been broken down in England in spite of revolutionary onslaughts. There was a note of wounded self-esteem in the banker's voice. Beyle wrote in his diary: "I once encountered similar manners in France. It was at the time when generals of no family of the old Napoleonic army sold themselves to Louis XVIII and by all kinds of base actions tried to penetrate into the Talaru drawing-room and other salons of the Faubourg St. Germain. The good manners of the upper classes in England and in France forbid any manifestation of energy. The young men are terribly concerned that their hair, which forms a small tuft on one side of the parting, should not fall on to the brow."

Thus in London his memories of Milan and Métilde faded away. There remained the ghosts of sentiments, names and words instead of images.

In the evening something amusing and revolting happened.

Barrot was whispering in the passage with a lad of eighteen—a fop with protruding lips, pomaded and impudent.

Barrot came into the room and suggested they should go to a brothel.

"There is no show this evening. It is real English boredom," he said. Mareste declined. Beyle agreed. The sense of emptiness which oppressed him made him yearn even for this dangerous adventure. The cab drove for an hour and a half.

On the outskirts, not far from the river, was a small three-storeyed house of fine brick. Barrot alighted ; the fop began to haggle before going inside. Beyle looked on with contempt.

"It seems we have got mixed up in an unpleasant affair. Here they will rob us of everything and throw us into the Thames."

Beyle opened his frock-coat and without saying anything, revealed the butt of a pistol.

"Now !" remarked Barrot.

The fop pointed swiftly at the door and went off.

"We must go in," said Barrot.

There was a moment's hesitation. Then three very sad, very frightened young girls looked out one behind the other and opened the door.

The furniture was just as though it had been made for dolls. Barrot could hardly squeeze into this room in Westminster Row. But a minute later everything was going as smoothly as possible.

Nobody robbed anybody.

Beyle wrote in his diary : "The unpleasant thing is that during the whole of my stay in England I felt unhappy when I was unable to end my evenings in that house, but if it had not been for the boredom of London and the conversations about the danger of these adventures, Westminster Row would never have seen me. You see that I am only twenty and not thirty-eight, as my birth certificate obstinately insists on proving to me. If it spoke the truth, I might find consolation in the grand world and with Parisian society women. But alas ! At the sight of a bourgeoisie in Paris or a St. Germain doll my heart closes up hermetically because of their falseness and affectation. When I think of the aristocracy squandering gold in tens of thousands on unnecessary balls and pretentious dinners, when I come across a *decent* English family, I see that these insignificant and absurd creatures promote their prosperity by selling themselves to the Government. What then can be said about my friend from Westminster Row ? I leave England with the idea that I shall rejoice with all my heart at the outbreak of a revolutionary terror, that will clean out those Augean stables known as the English aristocracy."

Barrot and Mareste left for France. Beyle made a few trips to the north and, feeling rested, prepared to follow their example. The evening before his departure he found out what time the coach left for Dover and began to pack his luggage. The floor-waiter came in and said to Beyle : "What, aren't you going to stay for the day ? The coach leaves at six o'clock in the morning, and at eight there'll be a spectacle that you won't see in France. All the foreigners who were going to-morrow have put off their departure."

"I haven't heard of any spectacle."

"I advise you to go into the dining-room and take a look at the square."

Beyle finished packing his trunk and went down to the dining-room. Through the slight evening mist, which turned into grey silhouettes the gabled houses at the other end of the spacious and deserted square, he saw some posts with huge cross-beams and eight dangling nooses. A maid in a white cap and apron was laying the table. Without interrupting her work, she glanced at Beyle and said : "They're going to hang the whole eight of them to-morrow

at nine o'clock. If you give me a shilling, I'll let you have the window of my room. I can't guarantee these windows here, as the place will be chock-full of people. The lodgers have ordered wine and a good breakfast, so as not to get tired of waiting while they bring up the men they're going to hang."

Beyle shook his head. Returning to his room, he began to stride up and down the room. He did not close his eyes till the morning, thinking on the significance of public executions and of how the "fortunate thousand" intimidated the inhabitants of London and the whole country by this means. At dawn he wrote on the binding of Shakespeare's deliciously gay comedy *Twelfth Night* the following words: "In my view it is simply murder when the English hang a robber or thief. The aristocracy aims at crushing its victim, presuming in this way to ensure its safety, as it knows quite well that it is precisely *itself* that has obliged man to become a rogue . . . This truth, so paradoxical to-day, will perhaps become general at the time when these lines will find readers. *The maximum of human liberty will be realized only in 1929.*"

At six o'clock in the morning the rain was pattering on the roof. Dull pools of water lay in the square; the sky was covered with clouds; coal dust was floating in the air, which had a stupefying, acrid smell.

Beyle dozed in the armchair in front of the writing-table.

The porter came in and touched him on the shoulder. The cabman took the luggage.

Beyle wrapped himself up and drove to the coach station without glancing at the erection in the square, which was gradually filling up with an inquisitive crowd.

The day passed delightfully. Under the green trees of the Baigneux park Beyle corrected the last proofs of the book *De l'amour*. The huge green packet lay on a bench. Proofs lay scattered on the grass, the sand was trampled down right to the subsoil. The author's posture was most uncomfortable, yet he did not even feel his neck get stiff and his elbow ache. The original manuscript was in the packet. It was made up of Italian placards written all over on the reverse side with lead pencil. They did not convey the same impression as before he made the trip to London. The image of Italy had grown dim, and it was better not to touch memories that were painful. Seven years had gone by like a minute. He had not heard a word of French for six months at a time. And but for the discovery of the Carbonaro organization, he would never have returned to France. He thought about that country: now he could see again the monuments, streets, city squares, but he could not see a society so lively and gay, with that vivacity of mind and spontaneity of feeling, which remained at that time only in Italy. Now that warmth had vanished, and the air of Italy was chilled by cold northern winds. It would be better not to return there.

The proofs were scattered by the breeze. The green lights and patches of sunshine from the brightly illuminated trees gradually departed from the area of the scattered papers. This small book, which would shortly appear in the windows of the bookshops, was a recollection of Italy and a memorial to very good sentiments.

The sun was beginning to set in the west. It was time to go.

On the way, in the avenue of the Palais Royal, Beyle saw staggering along a lean, bald man, without a hat, in an old-fashioned frock-coat, with inflamed eyes. The man, was Andrea Corner. Yet another Italian impression in Paris, the second that day! In the morning he had met di Fiore, who proudly carried his

leonine head on powerful shoulders. Di Fiore was living in France without languishing, as it was the only country where he was not threatened with the guillotine. The correspondence about his extradition was finished. He would never see his native country again, as he was condemned to death for taking part in the Neapolitan rebellion. Corner was without such glory. A descendant of the doges of Venice, one of the most distinguished Italians living in Paris, he was leading a bohemian life and had let himself go completely. Holding out his arms, he blocked Beyle's path.

"Listen, you Milanese devil," he said to him in Italian, "where is my apartment? I don't remember when I left it."

"Take my arm," said Beyle, "I'm in a hurry, and you are inclined to walk slowly."

He accompanied him to his apartment in the rue Gaillon and handed him over to the concierge.

"We've already let the police know!" laughed the porter. "Monsieur Corner has been missing for three days."

Beyle went on his way alone.

In the rue Gaillon, opposite a grey, six-storeyed house, he halted. He reflected for a minute, then opened the door, counted the ninety-five steps up the dark stairs, groped for the knocker and knocked on the door. Creaking and wheezing, the door opened. A discontented face looked at the visitor. It was Etienne Delécluze. Evidently he was writing. He peered against the light with his tired wide-open eyes, and recognizing Beyle, was reassured.

"Why have you come so early?" he asked.

"That is an uncivil question. In my opinion, I always come at the right time."

"I wouldn't say that, especially to-day."

"You're in a bad humour, I see, but all the same I won't go away and I can cheer you up; in half an hour's time Nodier, Vitet, Rémusat and Ampère will be here . . . Well, don't have a fit!"

"But where shall I put all that crowd? And do you think I'm going to chatter with you, when I've got urgent work to do for the newspaper?"

"So this is how you greet me after my arrival from England! Ah, the devil take you, do you think we're going to put up with this?"

"It's I who am going to put up with it."

"Well, that's the way it's always been!"

"You know that young Mérimée has been asking about you?"

"I don't remember him."

"How? You saw him at Lingay's."

"Ah, that plain-looking young man! I remember, I remember!"

"Yes, that plain-looking young man has looked in the bookshops for everything written by Baron Stendhal and, what is worst of all for you, he has declared that the articles in the London *Monthly Review* signed by Alceste and the letters D.N.K. are your articles, as well as everything written by Baron Stendhal."

"He's working in the police, your Mérimée?"

"You know, Beyle, in my opinion you ought to go to a mental doctor; either you are really in a bad way politically or else you are ill."

"Neither the one nor the other. I simply can't bear inquisitive youngsters."

"Mérimée is a man with an exceptionally keen mind, just and honest beyond the ordinary."

"What has that to do with me?"

There was a knock at the door. Delécluze frowned, hunched his back and went to the door, muttering: "Well, the invasion has started! It must be Nodier. Who except Beyle and Nodier comes at the wrong time?"

But it was Paul-Louis Courier. Melancholy, with enormous dark eyes, hiding his elegant chin behind the corners of his high collar which reached up to his side-whiskers, he held out his hand to Beyle in silence, sat down by the window and took a long reed chibouk off the wall. With an habitual gesture he slipped the strap over his left arm, filled the pipe, lit up and began to smoke. Delécluze calmly watched him.

"Well, how are things?" asked Beyle.

"I cannot say that the St. Pélagie prison was better organized than the other prisons of France. I was there two months and got bored."

"Is that so!" exclaimed Beyle. "I don't know. What obliged you to take up your quarters there?"

"Well, it wasn't because I was looking for rooms. Rather it was this piece of paper."

He took out of his pocket a carefully folded document. It was a subscription paper for the purchase of the huge Château de Chambord with the public's money for the newly born Duc de Bordeaux, son of the Duc de Berry, the heir to the throne of France, who was assassinated by Louvel.

"I've been in England," said Beyle, "and over there I wasn't in a position to discover that the Chambord papers were a passport to prison."

"Please don't grin. It's not really so frightfully funny. I published a pamphlet, which was so successful that the subscription for the national gift to the crown prince was a flop. For that I got two months' imprisonment. To be sure, crown princes like to have things given to them, and we like to have things left to us."

"When will you be quiet, Courier?" asked Delécluze.

"Look here, doesn't it make you furious," shouted Courier, losing his patience, "doesn't it make you furious that everything the revolution was made for, everything rivers of blood were shed for is irretrievably lost? I recently met a cousin, who is doing his military service in the Guards. I asked him: 'What have you been doing to-day?' He replied: 'We took the Holy Sacrament by numbers.' I asked him what he meant and he told me the men are paraded and marched off to Communion, and before that there is confession with the obligation to tell the priest about the political mood in the companies and squadrons. I asked: 'Who is your colonel?' He named him. 'Has he served?'—'He has served.'—'Where?'—'In England as a priest. He served masses.' 'Ah, so that's it,' I said."

"Ah, so that's it!" repeated Beyle. "It is remarkable, is it not? You know, Courier, you'll come to a bad end!"

"You know, Beyle, I called that out to you when I saw you in the north Italian mail-coach."

A shadow passed over Beyle's face. He must publish as soon as possible the book, which was weighing him down like a heavy trunk full of memories. He would prefer that no Italian themes be introduced into the conversation to-day. Nodier had promised to talk about Shakespeare, Vitet had declared that it would be a very interesting evening, and nobody had thought to warn Delécluze.

"I'll tell them to buy some wine," said Delécluze.

Courier sat in clouds of smoke, mocking and venomous, like Mephistopheles on the Brocken. Beyle was twirling in his hands the subscription paper for the purchase of the Château de Chambord as a gift to the heir to the throne. The whole of the upper part of the paper was filled with an engraving representing a child in a luxurious cradle, beside which lay a greyhound. Personages in ermine cloaks presented to the child the plan of his future possession and the deeds. The lower part of the paper was occupied by the coat-of-arms of the Bourbons.

"A ticket in a lottery in which you can't lose," said Beyle.

"France has already lost a good deal," replied Courier. "The bourgeoisie has ruined the peasantry, and this gift of twelve thousand arpents of land under vineyards is hardly noticeable in the budget of the royal family. But if the Château de Chambord is not in the hands of the peasantry, the prosperity of the district will be greatly undermined."

"Listen, Courier, nothing will induce me to believe that you are a rabid defender of the peasants. You are constantly having lawsuits with them."

"My dear fellow, you're mistaken. The lawsuits are brought by my wife, who is prepared to cut me up into quarters for every line of my pamphlets. They're afraid of me. It's impossible for them to fight me openly as a pamphleteer, so they have recourse to secret means. The staging of lawsuits on my estate is a form of blackmail."

"I thought so too at one time, but I've been told that you do not sign yourself Vigneron for nothing. It seemed to me that Courier was subdued, once he began to hide behind the back of Vigneron."

"I'd like to know the back behind which citizen Beyle has not hidden," replied Courier caustically. "Anyway, my pseudonym is a simple indication of my trade—I actually am a wine-producer."

Beyle smiled.

"Get accustomed to France, my dear fellow, get accustomed," growled Courier. "Apropos, give me back the Chambord paper. You've crumpled it up altogether; here, take this to hold instead."

Beyle read the paper. It was a secret circular of the Ministry of the Interior dated May 1822, instructing the French officials to use every means in the provinces to secure the election to the Chamber of deputies favourable to the Government. This cynical circular ended with a direct allusion to Ministerial funds, from which money could be obtained for bribing electors. At the same time a rather complicated system of getting rid of undesirable candidates was proposed. Beyle recalled the stories of the things that had happened at Lyons.

"Provocation has become a usual phenomenon," said Courier. "What happened at Lyons is observed everywhere in a less acute form. The police, the Press and the Bourse are very closely connected in the general work. The big financiers are interested in compromising the workers. They bribe the police and stage clashes of the workers with the soldiers. Disguised policemen fire at the sentries in the factory districts, and the newspaper reporters devote columns in the papers to these events. In the end the man who perpetrated the provocation indignantly reports the occurrence in the newspapers. He himself reads it, he himself is indignant, he himself demands repressions and he himself inflicts the punishment. All this without a word being uttered by the mass of French citizens."

"Yes, the Austrian police in Milan do not seem to have gone so far as that," said Beyle.

"It was different there. It was the work of the *Congrégations* there. In comparison with the *Congrégations* your friends from 'Santa Margherita' appear to be lambs. In France there are five complete police forces, each hating the other, each striving to do away with the other, and no doubt the most terrible of all is the police of the Jesuits. It functions like clockwork and seldom makes a mistake. Louis doesn't like it, but the Pavillon de Marsan teems with black beetles in cassocks. . . . Tell me, Beyle, what post would you like to occupy at present?"

"None whatever."

"Are you aware that Charles d'Artois is demanding a second examination of the lists of official persons? Napoleon's officers are being dismissed almost without exception, not to speak of those who were connected with the revolution. Bear in mind, your literary activity is not a success, and I'm sure it won't be, you'll soon get rather bored, especially if you become a deputy."

"That's quite out of the question," replied Beyle. "I am firmly set on the road to poverty. As you are aware, ninety-eight thousand out of twenty-nine million Frenchmen can vote, but only he who belongs to the fifteen thousand wealthiest citizens can become a deputy."

"Well, then the possibility of your getting bored is even wider. One fine day, after a newspaper article which they do not like, the officers of the Guards battalion will challenge you one after the other to a duel. If you're a good shot, you'll lay a couple out, but believe me, the third will get you. They will annihilate you on a lawful basis without the right of intervention on the part of any organ of defence. Such is our France."

Beyle folded up the circular, handed it to Courier and began pacing up and down the room.

The rusty key turned in the door. Delécluze came into the room with a shop-boy carrying a basket with the wine.

Delécluze prepared a bachelors' banquet. Beyle helped him. Courier sat in silence, immersed in clouds of smoke.

Guests arrived, mainly from the Arsenal company—a group of militant literary young men, who met at Nodier's, the librarian of the Arsenal Museum.

"You haven't a piano," said Nodier to the host. "There's no singing and dancing in your place. Fine sort of journalist you are!"

"I'm accustomed to people dancing to my tune," said Delécluze.

"Well, that won't happen," objected Nodier. "You aren't *Daphnis*, and we aren't the goats from *Chloe's* herd."

"When will your classical comparisons end?" asked a young man in a grey frock-coat, who was standing in a corner with his arms folded on his breast.

"Since when does *Mérimée* hate classical images?" asked Courier.

"In any case, if I put up with them, it is only in your presence. Your work on the manuscript of *Daphnis and Chloe* . . ."

"My God, when will these spiteful allusions stop?" exclaimed Courier pretending to be horrified. "Another classic image is the Fury. You know, *Mérimée*, that the man who poisoned my life on account of Longus's pastoral, on which I may have had the misfortune to spill a drop of ink, had a similar name—he was the Italian *Furia*. So do you want now to talk about my recollections of my Florentine misadventures and failures?"

"No, I only want to say that it is time you came out of the world of Greek and Roman heroes, it is time to reconsider the whole classic idea generally."

"The young man is right," said Beyle. "When the fathers of the present



shopkeepers marched against the Bastille, which by the by had scarcely any prisoners that day, they ought to have dressed up in Greek togas or Roman helmets, at least on the stage. But now, tell me, is it worth while troubling the ghosts of ancient Rome for the sake of an office desk or a shop counter?"

"What then do you think is worthy of attention?" asked Mérimée, as though delighted at the opportunity of talking to Stendhal.

"In Rome the Italians are busy overcoming their present antiquity. They want to construct a free Italian State. They give various forms to this idea and embellish it, neglecting the traditional forms. They call it *romanticismo*."

"That's just what we need," said Nodier. "We need to oppose our strong French *romantisme* to the obsolete classic traditions of our forefathers. Who, in your opinion, can give most pleasure to an audience—Racine or Shakespeare?"

"Shakespeare of course," replied Beyle.

"But that is a matter of opinion!" exclaimed Vitet. "And I don't even know whether your contrast is legitimate."

"Ah, it is very legitimate," declared Courier. "Is it possible to live on what people lived several hundreds of years ago, is it possible to keep the old forms of the theatre? It is uncivilized and absurd when events are following one another so rapidly as to make your head go round to give the spectators the tragedy of a single day merely because Aristotle and Boileau demanded the unity of time!"

"I consider it even more absurd," said Beyle, "to give instead of living characters the conventional rhetorical formulas of the vices and virtues. What good is your Racine in comparison with Shakespeare?"

"Listen," Vitet interrupted him. "How can one deny Racine? His French language is irreproachable. He has the gift to tear you away from the flatness and baseness of daily life."

Beyle got up from his seat. Pushing back his chair and knocking a glass off the table, he rushed forward like a corsair on to the deck and shouted: "Language? Racine has language? But he's a dead man! Do you realize what is language without a soul, language without expressiveness, the language of puppets with numbers, spouting noble phrases from the stage? How can one return to all that insipid nonsense after twenty years of revolution, executions, wars and conspiracies? To-day we're sitting at Delécluze's and laughing over Courier's witty pamphlet, and in a couple of weeks' time Courier will be in prison and Nodier in his capacity of Procurator will try him. Even now we have executions, conspiracies, the preparations for war with Spain. We'll soon see French officers debase themselves hunting for Riego and Quiroga—those best men of our time, those heroes of the revolution. What then? You want us to respond to the living demands of the present day with stiff pompous phrases. Why is Shakespeare near to us and why do I see in Shakespeare what has been so aptly called romance? Because he gave his contemporaries a living picture of the passions, the deeds of the time of Elizabeth, the conspiracy of Essex and thousands of similar things, which kept the spectators in incredible suspense, knew how to move them, put live problems before them and gave them the solution. That is what I call romance, but to live on old stuff, to restore the past, to inoculate the new generation with the senile blood of our fathers—that is what I consider classicism. Gather your cranks together at the Arsenal, there you have a piano, you sing ballads, you recite the verses of Monsieur Hugo, it appears you even sing Catholic hymns; you rave about

the middle ages. You may do what you like, but don't think it is necessary to anybody. What can be more stupid and absurd than to trim the rags of monarchy with medieval tinsel, and this at a time when the steam engine and the chemical laboratory are depriving you of all your mysticism and all your ravings! You want to escape from reality instead of conquering it. At noon you would have us look at a clock whose hands point to midnight. Our understanding is more worthy than your self-deception."

"Long live Beyle!" shouted Delécluze.

"You must certainly make a note of what you have said. There are remarkable ideas there," Mérimée said to him.

"Very well," replied Beyle. "I'll jot it down, only bear in mind that I do not care for advice unasked."

Mérimée looked quite calmly and imperturbably at Beyle, who was red in the face.

"I don't profess to advise you, but I beg you most earnestly."

"Come and see me to-morrow, I'll give you my *Italian Notes on Romanticism*," said Beyle, trying to conceal his amazement.

Mérimée bowed.

Returning home late in the night, Beyle reflected on the subject of the argument of the whole evening. Courier's pamphlet form attracted him. Lively and bright ideas on new and old literature, the classic and the romantic, were very neatly grouped. As he approached the house, he remembered that he had forgotten the green packet at Delécluze's. "It is dangerous to leave proofs with a journalist," he thought. Then with a wave of the hand, entered his empty, lonely room, lighted the lamp and wrote on a sheet of paper "*Racine et Shakespeare, œuvre de Monsieur Stendhal*." Then he picked up the anonymous Italian edition of his *Notes on Romanticism* and began reading and underlining it.

## CHAPTER THIRTY

IN THE COURSE OF THE WEEK TWO SMALL VOLUMES OF THE TREATISE "DE L'AMOUR" appeared in the windows of the bookshops. In the whole of Paris there were to be found only thirty persons who bought the book out of idle curiosity and even they shrugged their shoulders and left the second volume uncut.

A month later the book was forgotten, and in the boulevard Poissonnière the publisher, the elder Mongie, absentmindedly began to tear up these little volumes for wrappers.

The year 1823 arrived, and the indefatigable Beyle published another book—*Racine et Shakespeare*—after heated arguments as to whether Schiller was, properly speaking, a more up-to-date author and whether one ought to go back to Shakespeare. It was very difficult to convince even Mérimée that "Schiller was no more than a mere imitator of Shakespeare's rhetoric, serving up Christian duperies in a bombastic form."

"Our tragedy must be more simple. Shakespeare is nearer to us because our events are similar to the events in England in 1590, but we are immeasurably superior in intelligence to the English of the sixteenth century; our tragedy must be more simple and must do without rhetoric. Shakespeare used this means only because he needed to adapt one or other of the dramatic situations to the ideas of the public. The audience of those days was ignorant, and natural instinct served him instead of intellectual ratiocination. The French

mind must above all reject the German rigmarole, which happens to be called romanticism. Schiller does not possess sufficient intelligence to offer to his age a tragedy which expresses the basic aspirations of the epoch and the conflicts with the old world. Thus, if Shakespeare is further off in time, in regard to inner meaning he is much nearer to our day than Schiller who died recently."

But it was not so easy to convince Mérimée. The argument began in the morning in Beyle's room with him reading to his young friend the still fresh papers of his notes, and was continued in the Café Lemblin, in the evening in the box at the Théâtre Français and finally at night in the little room of a tavern, in the Bois de Vincennes, at a table decked with bottles, in the intervals between adventures with ballerinas. Next morning the argument was renewed, and so it went on for a whole week till Mérimée decided to part with his friend, realizing that there were too few points of contact between them. Beyle tried to persuade him not to do anything rash and enumerated all the "points of contact" in such a way that Mérimée, who was always reserved and cold, roared with laughter and paced up and down the room. Peace was concluded. Both agreed on a certain joint action. The treatise *Racine et Shakespeare* was the subject of a sceptical comment on the part of Monsieur Auger, the permanent secretary of the Académie des Sciences. Mérimée and Beyle decided to make a bandits' attack on the Academy. Together they spent two days composing an anonymous letter to Auger. It contained subtle arguments about the tasks, which were laid upon the Academy by its founder Cardinal Richelieu, indications that Auger in no way justified his confidence, and a warning to Monsieur Auger that exactly two weeks after receiving this letter he would be deprived of his mistress and might get his head adorned in such a way that it would be impossible for him to put on his hat.

After reading the letter and laughing, they sealed it and sent it off.

"I have never repented of anything," said Beyle.

"The only thing I repent of is that fate brought us together," laughed Mérimée.

Beyle shrugged his shoulders and said: "Make friends with Auger."

Mérimée took out of his portfolio a manuscript that had been carefully written out by a ministerial stenographer and, bowing obsequiously, handed it to Beyle.

"Be so kind as to read it. Auger is preparing for the press a refutation of your theories."

"I can't read it just now."

"Keep it and remember that I know how to make presents to my friends."

Beyle perused with curiosity the Academical *Manifesto against Romanticism*.

"What about replying to it?"

"We must reply," said Mérimée. "The defence of classicism by the Academy is far too serious a matter. The drive against the romantics may become the policy of the censorship committee."

"But I have no intention of being the defender of literary schools."

"Well, then don't reply."

"But he is attacking me personally?"

"Well, reply then."

"But it may turn into a polemic?"

"Well, then don't reply . . ."

Beyle stopped and fixed his eyes on Mérimée.

"For God's sake, dear friend, don't introduce literary methods into life: in talking with me you concoct the dialogue in the manner of Rabelais."

"But is that so bad?" smiled Mérimée artfully. "You concoct your doubts in the manner of Rabelais."

"I'm afraid you'll become a writer," said Beyle.

"Well, we'll see whether you cease to be a writer when Auger publishes his *Manifesto*!"

"No, my friend, I know only too well that if a man has taken up the pen, he must be prepared to be abused by the *canaille*."

"I hope you don't intend to get used to it."

"I've no intention of replying to the insulting attacks of creatures of that kind."

"But I'm sure that you can spoil me so much that I shall want to put pen to paper."

"I'm sure that that would happen even without my corrupting influence. You have tendencies to all sorts of vices."

"Oh, that's rather strong," objected Mérimée. "At most I wouldn't consider myself as being inclined to virtues."

"I'm convinced of that," said Beyle. "Last week's experience will not be repeated."

"Well, there'll be another week at Alexandrine's. By the by, I saw her yesterday with a captain of the engineering troops in a magnificent carriage belonging to the Commissariat."

"An original combination of weapons!" laughed Beyle. "Do you keep guard in the street when she drives past?"

"No, I merely wait for you to drive past with her in order to congratulate you on some incurable disease."

"It seems one is not infected by her twice."

"There! So my congratulations were too late."

"No, they seem to have come at the right moment," said Beyle. "I think it happened the day when we penned Auger's name in our letter."

"I didn't think it was so dangerous! Anyway I think that your pens are in altogether different ink; but have you been to see a doctor?"

"Of course, my friend, and quite successfully; I was joking."

Mérimée became silent. Then he laughed and said: "I understand you, cunning devil. You're jealous and afraid that I know the address of your evening amusements. Don't worry, I have enough of them myself and won't go the round of yours. By the by, to change the subject, do you know that Manuel has been excluded from the Chamber?"

"Yes, I read his speech of 1st March and I consider that he is absolutely right; he is the finest and noblest man in the Chamber. If he speaks with restraint of the disgrace of France in undertaking intervention in Spain in order to suppress the revolution, it is only the sad truth and not a reason for exclusion. In January the monarchist countries—Prussia, Austria and savage Russia—demanded the restoration of the monarchy in Madrid. The Russian Minister Tatistchev, a rogue, who has been making money on the supply of good-for-nothing ships to Spain, is interested in not being exposed. Now France is also taking a hand in the matter. What can be more base?"

"Note that Manuel was interrupted when he was saying something really revolutionary," said Mérimée. "The phrase: 'The danger which threatened the royal family became a real vital danger from the moment that France, revolutionary France, realized that now she must bring new forces and new energy to life' . . ."

"Yes, I know all that," interrupted Beyle. "I know that you don't sympathize with it and that it is all profoundly true. I also know that the Chamber shouted at him: 'Regicide! get out! Down with him!'—but there we shall never understand each other."

"Tell me, Beyle, is it true that in France there is a Secret Committee in which former Italian Carbonari are working? Is it true that La Fayette and Manuel belong to the committee? Is it true that under the name of engineer Vismara you took part in the Turin rebellion?"

"That's all nonsense, and I'm surprised that an intelligent man can listen to gossip."

"But you don't hide your sympathies?"

"And you vainly suppress your antipathies?" retorted Beyle. "Better let's go and have dinner, and then we'll go for a drive in the country."

Mérimée and Beyle sat down to rest on a broad green bench under the trees of the Bois de Boulogne. A minute later a short curly-haired man in a low top-hat and with a huge walking-stick in his hand came up to them. Behind him walked Courier, absentminded, sad-eyed and seeing nothing. While the fat man was asking permission to sit down on the same bench, he calmly seated himself next to Beyle. Beyle looked round, recognized Courier and exclaimed: "See what it means to be proud! He doesn't even say good-day!"

"Ah, forgive me!" hastily exclaimed Courier. "Please be acquainted: Doctor Koreff—the personal doctor of His Majesty the King of Prussia, Henri Beyle, the personal secretary, grandson, brother and grandfather of Buonaparte."

Mérimée looked at both of them mockingly. Beyle and Koreff were both thickset, and in the expression of their faces there was an elusive likeness.

"Less about the royal relationship," said Beyle.

"No, it is the real truth," said Courier and, turning to Doctor Koreff, he went on with the conversation: "We're in no hurry to go anywhere—since you have come at my request, let's take a walk. The fine weather, it seems, has never brought so many Parisians here as to-day, and afterwards I'll show you a document which is bound to interest you."

"Courier has again started some political intrigue or other," said Beyle.

"Not at all! I merely want to dissuade Monsieur Koreff from his bad opinion of the Parisian police. He regards Paris as a place of political repose. I don't know who made him believe such a thing."

"I have a very high opinion of Paris in general," said Koreff, "and consequently of the Parisian police as well, but I assure you that they have nothing to do with me. I am an object too unworthy of their attention."

"Listen," said Beyle, "let's follow those young men over there. They are Russian officers. I was once told the name of one of them. I recognize him at once."

"Ah, that handsome fellow there? But why should we follow them?"

Nevertheless all rose and mingling with the crowd, they walked behind the Russian officers at a distance of a couple of paces. Beyle followed with the greatest excitement every gesture of Shirkhanov, whom he had not seen for almost ten years. Shirkhanov's companion reminded him of the boy whom he had seen in Apraxin's house in the days when Moscow was burning. The latter had been a pupil in a gentlemen's boarding-school, who, with his teacher, had translated for him into French pages of Russian history books, while gazing with curiosity at the enemies who had captured Moscow so suddenly that he

and his boarding-school comrades had not had time to get away. Beyle did not remember the name of this boy, he only knew that it had a Polish sound and that he was called Peter. "Is it possible," he said to himself, "so to retain the childish expression of the eyes and the contours of the eyebrows, the bulging lower lip, that even the lapse of twenty years effects no change in a man?"

The Russian officers were talking freely in their own language. Beyle could make out only the name Saint-Simon, which he heard several times.

"You don't know the Russian language, it seems?" said Courier to Beyle.

"I have only retained a good memory of Russian invective," said Beyle.

"But Koreff, apparently, understands Russian."

"Very little. My wife's brothers—the Mathiases—have some sort of commercial business in Moscow. In my opinion the young men are talking about their visit to Saint-Simon, whom they found ill. Surely that crank with his fantasies can't have any success?"

"Yes, the descendant of dukes and a count who has renounced his title and is now living in an attic on bread and water and dreams of transforming mankind with socialism, as you see, has success with Russian guardsmen," remarked Beyle.

"A country of serfs and noblemen-savages—what is there in common between its representatives and the mad crank Saint-Simon!" exclaimed Courier. "Russia is living in the seventeenth century. I think the pampered young nobles were interested in Saint-Simon in the same way as the Russian Tsars were interested in ugly dwarfs."

"At any rate not that tall adjutant. I have the very best opinion of him," said Beyle.

"How did you come to know him?" asked Mérimée. "And why this infatuated tone?"

"They told me his name, but it requires an operation on one's throat to pronounce it properly. He was the adjutant of a prince whose name began with the letter 'V.' The prince was said to be the hero of the Cheverino redoubt."

"What is that?" asked Mérimée. "You know, when I was eleven, I used to stand for hours outside the railings of the Tuileries and watch those Asiatics in fur caps, with yellow stripes on their trousers and armed with lances, ride about the streets of Paris. It was a remarkable sight! Since then I have been anxious to meet Russians."

"I feel inclined to go up to them and make their acquaintance without any regard for propriety," said Beyle. "But I don't know how it will be taken. It will be better if we listen to what they are talking about."

Koreff, trying to translate word for word, said: "The older one is saying to the younger: 'Listen, Kachowski, all this "Industrialists' Catechism" is arrant nonsense. I shall go on opposing the admission of the merchant class into the society and the unions. Merchants are ignoramuses, and without education our cause is incapable of realization.'"

They walked a few more paces along the avenue. Snatches of Russian speech reached them. The young man was getting excited and his eyes flashed. Shirkhanov was smiling and reflected with melancholy seriousness on the meaning of the words.

"The Russian, it seems is quoting *The New Christianity*. Evidently he is very much under the influence of the Socialist. . . . 'The rulers of Europe have united under the banner of Christianity in a sacred alliance, but their

conduct maintains the old system of the power of the sword and the power of Caesar.' The young Pole is convinced that neither Tsar nor industrialist could give, as he expresses it, true freedom. . . . My word, but they are dangerous, your Russian officers. . . . What the deuce, why, he's a Jacobin, your officer! Look how his eyes light up when he turns to his companion. You hear, you hear what he is saying? He says that Riego made a mistake, that all royal families should be exterminated. If they had beheaded Ferdinand as they did Louis in France there would have been no oath-breaking by the king and no organized murder of a whole country by foreign arms. 'A Government that is not in agreement with the wishes of the people is always guilty, as in the sober words of the law there is the will of the people. What is present-day Russia? A monster and the bugbear of all nations. It is not enough to hang Arakcheyev—it is necessary to behead Alexander and wipe out the Tsar's family.' What do you say to that now?"

The four Frenchmen exchanged glances.

"There's a new Robespierre for you," said Mérimée. "But you say they are serfs and officers of the Imperial Guards."

"I'm sure this is an extremely rare case," said Courier. "We have before us terrorists in the uniform of the guards. Anyway, they are not simple travellers and haven't been to see Saint-Simon for nothing."

"Apropos, when will this demonstrative appearance of Russian officers in uniform in France cease?" said Mérimée indignantly.

"When the policy of the Holy Alliance comes to an end. At present Russian officers are doing the work of an international police force," replied Courier.

"Well, these are far from being police conversations!" remarked Beyle. "And in any case they are not very suitable conversations for a Russian detachment that has been sent to put down the revolt in Spain."

"But this fellow Kachowski is an accomplished terrorist," said Koreff in such a loud voice that both the officers turned round, looked at the Frenchmen and quickening their step, turned off into a side path.

The two heroes of the campaign of 1812 had met a second time. Once again they looked at each other from out of the crowd for a moment without knowing how fate had once made their paths cross. Prince Shirkhanov had long forgotten the frosty December morning at Arakcheyev's house at Gruzino, when as a young lieutenant he spent the whole night copying out the French correspondence of Henri Beyle, commissaire des guerres in Napoleon's army.

Beyle, who had once sought in vain for Mélanie Guilbert in burning Moscow and had written her disinterested friendly letters, had no idea that these intercepted letters had been read by the officer whom he had twice encountered in Paris. Fate parted them again.

Losing themselves in the crowd, the Russian officers disappeared. A minute later the four Frenchmen had forgotten about them. A tall, stout, heavy man in a long frock-coat with a huge velvet collar, with a round face and intelligent eyes, came towards them. A smile hovered on his lips, his eyes brightened up, his broad-brimmed hat was raised in polite greeting and the sun illuminated his shining bald pate. Béranger, grinning derisively, greeted Beyle and Courier with an exaggerated polite bow and then nodded his head stiffly in the direction of Mérimée and Koreff.

"Anyway, I was in prison a month longer than you," he said to Courier.

"The bigger the ship the bigger the voyage," replied Courier. "I can't say that I envied you in that respect."

"But I envy Vignerone, nevertheless. Your pamphlets are such strong wine that it knocks over even literary drunkards like me."

"Well, old man, I'd give all my pamphlets for your *Satan, dying from the poison of the Jesuit Loyola*. You yourself will agree that the Devil not being able to survive the Jesuit potion is a charming jest! But the fact that the General of the Jesuits immediately occupies the throne of the Lord of Hell, the fact that the Jesuit becomes the Devil and rules the world is absolutely beyond a doubt. I shall never be able to write about the Lord God as you do. I can never picture Him as an old man in a night-cap, looking out of the window half asleep, listening with amazement to the gossip of Paris about Him and fearing the spies of the French police. And your Apostle Peter, from whom the merry Margot stole the keys from under the pillow, Peter who is afraid lest Margot should admit disreputable characters into paradise—those are also magnificent verses!"

"In my opinion three months' imprisonment for such literature is not enough," said Beyle.

"Well, it seems the Government intends to correct that mistake. I have resigned in good time," said Béranger.

"How are you going to live?" asked Courier.

"I need very little," replied Béranger. "I'm not greedy and moreover poverty is as becoming to me as rosy cheeks are to youth."

"There is a rumour that the Government intends to deprive you of the right to poverty. They want to make you rich and silent."

"To feel quite rich and prosperous I need a few objects, light as cork and empty as a drained bottle. I need the two-a-penny heads of the Bourbons and then I shall be satisfied. This payment can be made without any prejudice to the ministerial budget."

"It's a wonderful day to-day," said Beyle. "Marvellous weather. Why these political flashes of lightning in a perfectly clear sky? Gentlemen, each of you is like a Leyden jar: you approach and electrical discharges begin. Your phrases crackle as you speak; you score the air with flashes of lightning."

"Yes, but you'll agree that these discharges are not made by the copper balls of a Leyden jar, for neither Courier nor I are in the least copper heads. Your analogy is unsuccessful, Beyle!"

"Anyway you are a literary man, and politics in literature is like a pistol shot at a concert."

"I have nothing against it," said Courier, "especially if both shots have the same effect."

Their attention was drawn by an old man leaning on a stick, who wheezed and coughed as he walked. He was a short, lame man with long grey hair hanging down to his shoulders; he had a furrowed brow and bright sclerotic eyes. Only then did they remember that Béranger had been leading this old man by the arm just before he greeted them.

"Well, I'm going to continue my walk. I'll go as far as a cab and then I'll drive to the rue Battoir," said the old man. He slightly raised the brim of his hat and with bent back hobbled along the avenue, leaving deep traces of his heavy stick in the sand.

"Who's that?" asked Beyle.

"I didn't introduce you, as it was rather difficult to do so without permission. The old chap is a bit capricious, and after his recent attempt at suicide I do everything I can to keep him from being upset. Now he is going to his semi-



basement underneath my room. He'll lie down on a heap of rags and will stay there a week without going out. To-day it was all I could do to get him to come out into the fresh air."

"But who is he anyway?" asked Beyle.

"Why, he's Rouget de Lisle!"

All of them exchanged glances and were silent. The author of the "Marching Song of the Army of the Rhine," sung on 30th July, 1792, by the Marseilles federates, and which afterwards went round the whole world under the name of the "Marseillaise," the author of this song was living in terrible poverty and disease, forsaken by all, waiting for death and invoking it passionately.

All reflected on this encounter in different ways. Beyle recalled how, on the day when Louis XVI was arrested, Rouget de Lisle, having quarrelled with Carnot, tore off his own epaulets and threw them down at the feet of the General. The officer, the flaming patriot who wrote the famous hymn of the revolution, could not endure the news of the arrest of the royal family and went into retirement. From that day he turned from a revolutionary into a rapidly decaying corpse.

Mérimée said to himself that he would never be able to write a revolutionary hymn. How could one be infected with such enthusiasm! A huge crowd with red flags filled him with scorn.

Courier thought that if he had been the author of the "Marseillaise," he would have known how to make better use of his fame. And all of a sudden he recalled with a frown the conversation between his wife and the steward, which he had heard through the partition. What was the use of being a famous pamphleteer with that disorder at home! Old Florimont, the steward, a man of huge stature, thinking that his master was not at home, tumbled Courier's wife on the bed. The noise could be heard through the partition and then voices, frankly criticizing the husband and showing every indication that the gendarme and the priest had ordered the wife to keep a watch on Courier. It was hard to say whose fate was the better. Perhaps when he was an old man, he too, like Rouget de Lisle, would have to lie in a filthy room in a furnished lodging-house and wait for death.

Béranger smiled in a good-natured and gentle way. Fate, which had made him the favourite of the Parisian poor, the craftsmen and middle-class people, had brought him another gift—that of being nurse to the old baby Rouget de Lisle and listening to his moving stories of events, which Béranger had been too young to have knowledge of or to witness.

Doctor Koreff, drawing his neck into his collar and clasping his hands behind his back, so that his walking-stick got in the way of the passers-by, recalled that when the police searched his house in Berlin they confiscated the manuscript of the "Marseillaise," and that the Polish gendarme who questioned him, calling him, like an old acquaintance, "Ferdinand Davidovich" and patting him on the back, tried to persuade him to talk about his Russian friends, although he had not a drop of Russian blood. The thought of the Polish gendarme suddenly gave place to the thought of the Russian officer Kachowski, who had said: "Russia is in a sack, and the Tsar is a strong knot. The knot must be cut with a knife, and then a living Russia will come out of the sack." However, what was the document which Courier wanted to show? He had begun by talking about the tales of Hoffmann, admitting that Koreff, a friend of the author, had been portrayed by Hoffmann under the name of Vincent

in the *Serapion Brothers*, and suddenly added without rhyme or reason: "I want to show you the face of your first visit to Paris." "This fellow Courier is a devil and not a man!" thought Koreff.

The five Frenchmen at the turning of the avenue of the Bois de Boulogne exchanged glances, each pair of eyes with the four other pairs. Beyle, Béranger and Mérimée walked ahead. Koreff bent down as though to fasten his shoe laces. Courier remained beside him. A few minutes later they were nine or ten paces behind the others. Courier took out a sheet of paper and gave it to Koreff to read. It was a form of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, addressed to the Prefect of the Paris police on 30th November, 1822:

"I suggest that you keep a secret watch on Doctor Koreff, who has arrived from the Duchy of Baden, as he expresses revolutionary opinions very openly and, having letters of recommendation, has entered into very close contact with representatives of the opposition. Being the domestic doctor of Prince von Hardenberg, he was dismissed from this post and expelled from Prussia on account of his insolent revolutionary agitation. As Koreff is a man of the world, extremely polite and well educated, his sociability will give you every opportunity to keep a very careful watch on him, which will not be in the least fatiguing for your informers in high society."

Koreff turned pale and dropped the paper. A handsome, well-dressed young man with an impudent face and the smile of a harlot rushed to pick it up. Courier kicked him in the behind and the obliging young man went sprawling along the sandy path. With lightning rapidity Courier picked up the paper and put it into his pocket. His huge dark eyes blazed with fury and seemed ready to reduce the obliging young man to ashes. The latter picked himself up and took out a whistle.

Beyle went up to Courier and asked: "What is the matter?"

"Nothing," replied Courier, secretly passing him the screwed-up paper. "Get into the first cab that comes along as quickly as you can and go away."

A mounted gendarme rode up. The handsome young man pointed to Courier and shouted: "Arrest him. He has stolen my gold watch."

Courier brandished his stick. The gendarme got off his horse and, waving his arms, demanded that Courier should return the watch or go with him to the Prefecture. Beyle had a bold idea; he sprang on to the gendarme's horse and galloped away into the depth of the forest. There he dismounted, hitched the horse to a bush and set off in the direction of the suburbs as though nothing had happened. On the way he smoothed out the document. Accustomed to such episodes in Milan, he was not at all surprised on reading it. However, for the sake of caution he decided not to keep the stolen paper on him, and not knowing what Courier, who had remained in the hands of the dismounted gendarme, would do, he tore up the secret police document and threw it into the bushes.

The gendarme's search was fruitless. The young man whose watch had been stolen looked disappointed. The paper, which had been stolen from the Ministry of Internal Affairs and had undoubtedly been in Courier's hands, was not found, and for this reason the young man's disappointment with regard to the mythical gold watch was well founded. He had failed to carry out the mission that had been entrusted to him. The gendarme had lost his horse through the fault of an impudent bourgeois whose acquaintance everybody denied. Brushing the sand off his clothes, the young police agent could not say for certain whether the bourgeois was a casual companion of Courier or

an old acquaintance. All that was clear was that Koreff, who was under observation, was closely connected with the pamphleteer Courier, known under the name of Vignerón. But this was a piece of very stale news so far as the police were concerned.

## CHAPTER THIRTY-ONE

MUCH TIME HAD PASSED SINCE THE DAY WHEN ARAKCHEYEV, HAVING SET OUT from Chudov for Gruzino, jumped out of the carriage on receiving news of Nastasia Minkin's death at the hands of the peasants, and rolled in the green grass at the side of the road in wild rage and grief. Some time had passed since the days when there were waves of revolt among the army settlers. Piotr Yakovlevich Chaadayev had long been retired. The brothers Alexander and Nikolai Turgenev were wandering abroad.

There was a deserted air about Petersburg, where the dead quiet of a graveyard prevailed. And as though harmonizing with this quiet, the Emperor Alexander I sank into eternal rest on the shores of the Sea of Azov.

In the days when the Grand Duke Mikhail Pavlovich galloped from Warsaw to Petersburg, exchanging letters with his brothers Nikolai and Konstantin, in those days a turbulent sun rose over the frost-covered Neva. The young men of the army were whispering, and there was alarm in people's hearts.

Tossing a silver coin to the *izvozhik*, retired second captain of cavalry Kachowski called on Kondrati Fedorovich Ryleyev.

The conversation was short.

"Shirkhanov is unwell and isn't likely to live long. He is entirely in agreement with me that things will get better only when the reigning family has been exterminated. But it is not from poverty and the persecution he has been subjected to since he abandoned the aristocracy and liberated his peasants that he has become so resolute."

Kachowski took out a silver coin with the effigy of Nikolai Pavlovich and said: "To-day I parted with my last Konstantin rouble; here is the new coinage. One must kill both of them and start the revolution."

Ryleyev pretended not to hear. Then, looking away from Kachowski, he went over to the window and said: "You won't set fire to this ice with your flint! But the thing has got to be done. You understand what I mean?"—He went up to Kachowski and shook him by the shoulders. "Do you understand that one must make a fruitless sacrifice, give one's life, hearing and seeing nothing, in order to show what oppression is and that it has not broken us?"

While we are aflame with freedom,  
While our hearts for honour live,  
Friend, let's devote to our native land  
The finest transports of our souls."

"I don't agree with fruitless sacrifice," objected Kachowski. "There's no need to shed blood for nothing. If it were only one's own, it wouldn't matter. Now look here, Kondrati Fedorovich, I tell you again, give up putting your hopes in the Tsars. Here's an example for you. The Neapolitans came out into the square, all the young army men, like our own, overthrew the yoke of tyranny, and the king swore fidelity to the people with the words: 'May the Lord punish the king, if he forgets this day.' Then the king went off to the north and at the demand of our Alexander returned with a pack of foreign curs and sat on the neck of his people again, executed all the officers and broke up

the whole Carbonaro society. Do you want me to give you another example? Our own Alexander helped our troops to dishonour themselves by invading Spain. Remember that King Ferdinand was arrested and sentenced to death at Cadiz. He summoned Riego, swore again to be faithful to the constitution, promised to expel the French troops from the kingdom and begged for his life to be spared. Honest people are trustful. The king was set free under Riego's guarantee. And what happened? What was the first thing Ferdinand did? By his orders Riego was seized, arrested and poisoned. The hero, who renounced the throne that was offered him, the friend of the people and the saviour of the king's life, was by the orders of that crowned perjurer taken through the streets of Madrid in a cart drawn by a donkey and hanged like a criminal. That was how Ferdinand behaved! Is that not enough to make anybody's heart shudder? Instead of the promised liberty the peoples of Europe saw themselves oppressed, education was hampered and the prisons of Piedmont, Sardinia and Naples, and the whole of Italy and Germany were filled with shackled citizens. With these examples before us, are we now going to allow Konstantin or Nikolai to be crowned? Death to them, I tell you, death to them!"

Long after midnight Kachowski tapped on Shirkhanov's door.

The once brilliant young man, Mikhail Shirkhanov, now a retired second captain of cavalry of the Akhtyrsky Regiment of Hussars, was tossing about in a fever in a dark hovel in the neighbourhood of Yelagin Island. His beautiful hair was in disorder and stuck to his temples, his enflamed lips were dry and cracked; even in sleep his huge eyes were wide open. He tossed about in the bed, having dropped the pillow on to the floor, and raved. For the first time after many years he saw Natasha. She came up and put a hand on his brow, and he wondered why she was attired in a pink dress with a high waist-line, as for a Paris ballroom. She said something about the mystic circle of the Duchesse de Broglie and pointed to a cross of black diamonds hanging on her neck. He was hurt that she should keep up the quarrel and condemn him for the measures he had taken to liberate all his peasants. After Natasha he heard the voice of Nikolai Turgenev, dry, cold, almost heartless, yet so thoughtful; it went from the mind to the heart. Then he remembered the guard-room, where he had met the man who had first helped him to strike out on the real path. It was only recently that he had got to know this man who had been his secret director for many years. He was Alexander Muraviev, a freemason, who had become a member of the League of Prosperity and afterwards entered the Northern Society. Now, too, Muraviev said quite clearly: "Shirkhanov, life has passed in vain, and further ahead everything is blacker and blacker."

Shirkhanov answered aloud: "Life has not yet passed, and further ahead, we shall see."

His raving came to an end. The yellow lamp lit up the shapely form of Kachowski. He brought with him the cold snow on his boots and the latest news received from Ryleyev—to-morrow they must assemble in the Senate Square. Nikolai was to take the oath.

Shirkhanov jumped up.

"I'll be there to-morrow," he said. "But what have they decided to do?"

"Trubetzkoy is the leader. He will give the orders. We are to go straight to the Senate Square, but you'd better to stay where you are. You look very ill, you might catch cold and get worse."

"When the head has been taken off, one doesn't weep about the hair! Perhaps I'll get well again," said Shirkhanov. "Listen, Kachowski, ask in the kitchen for some tea."

"So there we are. And to-morrow we'll take the bear by storm."

"I wouldn't call him a bear. He's more like a tiger. His bearing is gentle, chivalrous, but he has a mean spirit. How is it that from a brigadier-general under the command of Paskevich he suddenly becomes the All-Russian Imperial. . . ."

"You're always dreaming about corporals."

"The devil knows what I dream about," said Shirkhanov, "I dream things I can't understand."

"Drink some vodka," said Kachowski.

"It won't do me much good," replied Shirkhanov. "When it gets a little warmer, I'll go to where I shan't have to wear a fur coat."

"Yes? Of course, the Shirkhanovs are a southern breed."

"One would think you were talking about pheasants!"

There was silence for a while. Shirkhanov and Kachowski drank strong, over-brewed tea. The sick man felt better and more cheerful. Apparently, next morning would bring some sort of decision.

At eleven o'clock in the morning, shivering from a chill and wearing a Caucasian hood, an army forage-cap and civilian clothes, Shirkhanov descended from the quay of Vasiliev Island and crossed the snow-covered Neva. He did not quite understand what was going on. He saw a square of troops near the monument of Peter the Great, a disorderly movement along the quay, and heard shouts and finally a shot. At this spot the Neva is four hundred and sixty paces wide. From the middle of the river Shirkhanov could make out quite clearly disorderly groups of soldiers and civilians. Someone behind him called out: "Good heavens, what's going on over there!"

Shirkhanov looked round at the speaker, but the latter was already running across the Neva. At that moment a salvo of musket fire rang out.

Without feeling any pain Shirkhanov fell down on the ice. Blood was flowing from his throat. A moment later he began to lose consciousness, his right arm jerked back and his life ended. By the evening a heavy fall of snow covered the tracks across the ice of the Neva and shrouded the dead man. Peter Kachowski knocked on Shirkhanov's room for an whole hour in vain.

"He has been out since the morning," said the old woman, when she came in.

"May I wait for him?"

"Wait, my dear, only you can't come in, as you see."

"And how is his health?"

"He has been ill, but this morning he came out quite gay and said: 'Well, now we'll have a decent life! I'm going off to Naples, old girl.'"

Kachowski tapped his forehead.

"To Naples? Is that what he said?"

"Yes, that is what he said."

Kachowski was horrified: near the Vosnesensky Bridge, in the house of a Frenchman called Mussard, was a third-rate "Naples" hotel, in which he lived. If Shirkhanov had gone there he was sure to have been arrested.

What was to be done? It was impossible to go home. He would have to choose some non-military address. "I know," he said to himself, "I'll go to Gretch: they won't look for me there." He did not find Gretch at home, but

the porter told him that the St. Petersburg Chief of Police had just been there.

"They called out Mr. Gretch," chattered the porter willingly, "it was after midnight, and asked him where Mr. Kachowski lived. Mr. Gretch went out to His Excellency's carriage and said he didn't know, but the Chief of Police showed him a note, which said: 'Near the Vosnesensky Bridge.' Mr. Gretch shook his head, and the Chief of Police asked him: 'Do you know who wrote this note? The Emperor himself!' There's a fine to-do! Mr. Gretch came back very upset."

Kachowski was also upset. Obviously it was impossible for him to go home, and things were not well with Shirkhanov.

He decided to go and spend the night at Kozhevnikov's place. He got there just before dawn. He slept very little. On 15th December, tormented with pity for Shirkhanov and realizing that he loved that man as he had never loved anyone else before, he went to the Vosnesensky Bridge by way of the side streets to take at least a peep out of the window of his room in the hotel. A policeman was standing at the corner. Kachowski did not look at him. He was desperately conscious of the danger but at the same time he felt an irresistible desire to go and meet it. His legs seemed to be loaded with lead. Every step was incredibly difficult. Only another couple of paces and he would go up and ask whether a fair-haired man with a black moustache and blue eyes had passed that way. "A beautiful face tortured by illness and sorrow, the face of a real hero," thought Kachowski.

A heavy hand was laid on his shoulder. Mocking eyes looked straight at him.

"Your worship, you're under arrest," said a Cossack in a low voice.

Kachowski, shaking the hand off his shoulder and throwing off his army greatcoat, leapt like a cat towards the bridge. A bullet whizzed past his ear. The mounted policeman overtook him and struck him with a whip. . . .

His head was heavy, his thoughts were confused, chasing one another, but nevertheless he must make an effort to open his eyes. He had the impression that bright sunlight shone through his eyelids and he seemed to be swimming in red fire. But it was not a fire—it was the red silk hangings in the Winter Palace, and the light silvery jingling of the spurs of the four gendarmes was not the little bell of a troika, which was taking him along the Kovno highway with an order for post horses right up to the frontier and with a passport to Paris.

The men straightened themselves up. Kachowski came to his senses for a moment. Two escorts lifted him up by the elbows. At the other end of the room the hangings were quietly moved aside and a man in the military greatcoat of the Izmailovsky Regiment appeared.

Kachowski mastered himself completely and walked with firm steps towards Nicholas. But the latter raised his right hand from the distance as though to stop Kachowski, and himself went towards him.

Never in his life had Nicholas I heard anything more insulting than Kachowski's first words in reply to his questions.

"Pardon, Your Majesty, I'm going to speak quite frankly. My sincerity shows the measure of my zeal towards you. When you were a Grand Duke, we could only form an opinion of you from appearances. Your visible occupations were war and arms, and we were horrified at having a colonel on the throne. Your brother quickly adapted himself to the ways of the people, but

all of a sudden he altered his course and turned against them and thereby gave rise to all the conspiracies among us. The wars came to an end. We hoped that the Emperor would concern himself with the internal order of the State. After waiting for twelve years only the form of the civil uniforms has been changed. Do you think, Sire, that if you ceased to exist, there are many people who would sincerely regret you?"

These words sealed Kachowski's fate.

The Russian movement was stopped.

1825 was a year when the whole of European history took a sharp reactionary turn.

France saw the commencement of the five-year madness of Charles X.

## CHAPTER THIRTY-TWO

IN 1825 A SECOND EDITION OF "RACINE ET SHAKESPEARE" WAS CALLED FOR. Beyle calmly did the work. Nevertheless he published a reply to Monsieur Auger's manifesto against the Romantics. At the same time he began to be seriously alarmed at the attack on literature, which the new men of the new France were making. These new men, who were busy with the "serious" problems of the exploitation of tens of thousands of workers, drew up laws forbidding access to the factories and workshops of France to citizens of non-French nationality, as their own engineers had invented such methods of improving production that thousands of workers were rendered superfluous. The English and Italian industrialists vied with one another in trying to buy up the designs of the French machines. There was unemployment in Paris—the same phenomena could be observed as those described in England by Byron in 1812. The men who were in power, dictating the laws and throwing the workers out into the street, regarded the fussy Romantics with alarm: the literary battle might go beyond the boundaries of literature and give rise to a quite unnecessary social trend. The young Benjamin Constant put forward a proposal that there should be no interference in the relations between workers and owners. In his *Cours de politique constitutionnelle* he firmly and insistently maintained the idea that the organization of the relations of society was based on the right distribution of power between rich and poor. But poverty entailed too many handicaps, and only the rich would really decide what laws were necessary to the country. All other dreams of human happiness and a just organization of human society were a highly pernicious occupation which gave rise to a host of false theories. This demanded a reply. It led to the publication of a pamphlet by Stendhal under the title of *D'un nouveau Complot contre les Industriels*.

In a draughty attic, tossing on his pillows trying to turn himself towards the light, throwing back his shaven bronzed head like that of a Roman senator and heaving his last sigh, the Socialist Saint-Simon departed this life. His doomed friends were awaiting execution in the fortress of Spielberg in Moravia.

That year, following the example of his friend the Emperor Franz, who had personally questioned the Carbonari, Nicholas I turned the Winter Palace into a torture chamber. At times, stealing quietly up and appearing to be affable, he would endeavour with touching sympathy to soften the hearts of the stern conspirators; at times, springing out like a panther from behind the red

curtain, he would seize a Decembrist officer by the collar and shout: "What have you been up to? Do you know that you're going to be hanged to-morrow?" That year the Greek soldiers celebrated the anniversary of the death of their leader, the strange, whimsical man, Lord Byron, whom everybody spoke of as a remarkable poet. At the same time the restless pamphleteer and indefatigable politician Courier, whose activities had alarmed the Paris police and the Ministry of Internal Affairs, was discovered shot through the breast in a wood not far from his home.

A good many things happened in that year: Louis XVIII died and the Comte d'Artois in his old age became King of France at last. The road from Paris to Rheims was strewn with silver coins. The King was crowned according to medieval custom in the same city to which Joan of Arc once led the semi-idiot Charles VII after her victories. After the coronation the King performed the medieval ceremony of touching for the king's evil.

That year the French émigrés, who had fled from the Revolution, raised their heads. Men in black cloaks with parchment documents knocked on the doors of country houses and manors, called out those who had been working the land for twenty years, and showing them the document, demanded that the peasant farmer, who had possessed the nobles' land since the Revolution, should quit the dwelling immediately without waiting for a further summons and go off with his family to wherever he pleased. And in the event of the slightest opposition armed men appeared, silently led out the old people, wives and children and shot them there and then beside the fence of the vineyard. That year Nikolai Turgenev, a member of the Russian Secret Society, with a fixed expression of horror in his face, called on old La Fayette, the favourite of all past revolutions. Gazing into the old man's lively bright eyes, he said that a disguised Russian gendarme was waiting at every street crossing, to whisk him away secretly to the icy land where the cruel Tsar would send him to the gallows or to Siberia, together with a thousand friends of his who had been captured. And old La Fayette, listening to the Decembrist Nikolai Turgenev, without changing his expression and with the same shrewd merry smile, wrote for him seven letters to America and seven letters to London and advised him to leave France immediately. Nikolai took refuge in England, and his brother Alexander became his guardian. From that year began the burdensome life of the one and the wanderings of the other. Nikolai Turgenev lived in England, in a village beyond the reach of the clutches of Tsar Nicholas's gendarmes.

Alexander Turgenev led an unsettled life. Moving from town to town, listening to lectures of celebrities, making worldly acquaintances and entering into friendly liaisons, he carefully collected for his brother his impressions of the salons of Paris and supplied him with the latest information about the intellectual life of the French capital. In his brother's stern, compulsory solitude he made up to him for the absence of his friends and with bright interesting letters relieved the stifling monotony of the wooden house at Cheltenham.

That year Mérimée's teacher Lingay went through a good many unpleasant moments remembering that it was he who, at the request of Louis XVIII, had composed the most caustic newspaper attacks on the Pavillon de Marsan. Now the Pavillon de Marsan had become the emblem of authority, and the discovery of Lingay's authorship might have serious consequences for him.

That year Lingay's pupil, Mérimée, gave himself up with enthusiasm to a refined and elegant piece of mischief, which consisted in his trying to re-incarnate



himself in the Spanish gypsy Clara Gazul, and wrote a number of bourgeois comedies with tragic endings and bourgeois tragedies with comic dénouements. The jesting, gay Ary Scheffer painted Mérimée in female costume, and it was in that guise that the author of *Le Théâtre de Clara Gazul* appeared before the gapers of the Parisian bookshops.

And it was then that Beyle, as he went up the steps of the Duchesse de Broglie's mansion, heard from Corner, the Italian, that the best woman in the world—Métilde Viscontini—had died from her continual griefs and misfortunes, proudly enduring her loneliness and persecution by the authorities. Beyle staggered and gripped the railings, and Corner with a sorrowful look clumsily supported him under the arms. A young girl with a black diamond cross on her neck looked at Beyle with enormous frightened eyes and quickly brought him a glass of water. She was the fiancée of the ill-fated Mikhail Shirkhanov, Nathalie Shcherbakova, the ward of the Stroganovs. Beyle always remembered this Russian girl. He always called her in his mind Armance and gave her an imaginary Russian surname—Zohiloff. He tried to draw a portrait of her, tried to tell her story. This was the origin of the first draft of the novel *Armance*. Realizing that he was not a belle-lettriste, he laid the sketch aside.

His heart refused to be reconciled to the idea that Métilde was dead. Not long afterwards the news arrived of the death in England of Métilde's lover, Ugo Foscolo, the handsome broad-shouldered giant with the slim waist and red hair and the crazy, merry eyes, the remarkable poet and bold conspirator, one of the most terrible plotters in Italy, who dared in the name of the people to say bold things to the face of the all-powerful Napoleon. Foscolo died in a hovel on the banks of the Thames in a London suburb. When he heard of Foscolo's death, the jealousy which had tortured Beyle gave place to a sense of admiration for the poet and champion of Italy. Again his Italian impressions surged up like a wave, rose like a whirlwind and disturbed the habitual course of his life.

With incredible speed he wrote sketches of the life of Rossini and gathered together his surviving Italian letters in a big volume, but nothing helped him to get rid of his sense of weariness after the countless losses of the heavy winter.

At forty-three it is easy to remember, but almost impossible to revive the scenes of past years. After merry evenings with friends at the "Frères Provençaux" and after a heavy drinking bout Beyle would go off to Passy in the early morning to sit on a bench, his head buried in his hands, trying to conceal from a passing keeper the convulsive shaking of his shoulders from his silent weeping. Almost like a thief, afraid to admit to himself the unreasonableness of his conduct, he took his seat in the stage-coach to the south and, beginning from Orleans, wrapped himself up in his hooded greatcoat as though from cold and pulled over his brow his low, broad top-hat so as not to be recognized. On a spring day, when the mountains of Dauphiné were covered with a blue haze, which hid from view the endless stretches of forest and the blue lakes, he approached his native town. And as he had done once before when passing the hedge at Claix, he asked a boy to bring him a bunch of grapes from the vineyard which had once belonged to his father. Before reaching the Place Grenette, he got out of the coach, took a few steps along the street, but could not make up his mind to go close up to the house where he had spent his childhood. He drank coffee in a neighbouring street, then walked with rapid steps to the barrier and hurried back to Paris in the return coach, realizing the complete absurdity of his behaviour.

The lakes of northern Italy, which he had passed on that terrible day when he parted with Métilde, were beckoning to him again like something inexpressibly eerie and infinitely attractive. It was there that he realized for the first time what it meant to part with life. Every step took him further away from the dearest and best being he had met in life. Then also, the same as in these days, the sun shone and the road, full of quivering foliage, brought him nearer with every step to the snow-white Alpine heights, and behind him, in the flowering plains of Lombardy, remained seven of the best years of his life, gone beyond recall. Every step towards the north caused him incredible pain; he thought that one bold call to the postilion, one desperate turning back—and he might see Milan and Métilde again. . . . Now he would never see her. It was a terrible thought, wild and unintelligible!

A month later he was sauntering about the streets of Rome. Never before had the city seemed to him so deserted and terrible. All the places where he had once been happy now caused him pain. A wall near the Campo Verano, which had once been covered with verdure, had collapsed. The stones, just like the bones of skeletons, jutted clumsily out of the ground, and he could not help comparing his own life to these melancholy ruins.

On the return journey to Paris Beyle was more taciturn than ever. The gentle eyes of a red-haired woman passenger gazed at him with sympathetic curiosity so intent that Beyle at last began to talk. She was the daughter of the Napoleonic General—Count Curial. On getting out at the Laffitte coach station, Beyle helped her to transfer her trunks to a cab, and she asked him to have the kindness to accompany her to her house. In the cab a trunk was jolted and almost fell off. Beyle and his companion both caught hold of it by the handle at the same time. Their palms crossed and their fingers linked. Beyle did not let go of her hand, and Madame Curial did not ask for it back. Thus a few minutes passed until the grey-haired concierge opened the gates with a cry of joy. Madame Curial left the servants to bring in the things. Beyle stood undecided in the hall, and suddenly the long thin gloved hands twined themselves round his neck.

It was after midnight when Beyle returned home. In the morning he went out to look for Andrea Corner, woke him up and questioned him about the details of Métilde's funeral. Corner told him that this woman, who was endowed with exceptional vitality and was always so gay and enterprising, had suffered very little before her death. She died peacefully. Her pale face became delicate and transparent like the face of Julia Alpinula; looking at her as she lay in the coffin, one might have thought that she was a marble statue that was being returned to the earth by a Lombard peasant frightened by what he had found while ploughing. This vision of Métilde accompanied Beyle throughout the rest of his life. And as often happens with people standing on the borderline of two epochs, when the old lives side by side with the new, so with Stendhal the old love of the romantic lived easily side by side with his physical infidelity to the beloved being—such was the peculiarity of the new age. In this respect he had no questions or doubts. The same evening he accepted without more ado Madame Curial's invitation to visit her at her Andilly estate. His stay there was not altogether a felicitous one. The Countess had to hide her friend in the basement. Twice a week she would go down to him to feed him like a prisoner, and he did not feel any worse for that. Then there began again a prosaic time of walks in the park and endless conversations. Beyle began to feel irresistibly drawn to her long before she had sufficiently

rested from their previous meeting. He wanted to prolong the hours of their walks together; she on the other hand felt they were seeing too much of each other and that it was already becoming a menace to her happiness. For the first time in his life Beyle failed to notice this. His transports grew stronger, hers became weaker. When he suddenly realized this, he rushed back to Paris without saying good-bye, almost stealthily. There, after the first few weeks of separation, letters came after him again. Then began the long, sweet hours of a period of lovers' rendezvous, when the time seems to drag and the minutes are counted with impatience. Sometimes it seemed to Beyle that the appointed hour would never come, but it came at last and five minutes later Madame Curial was unable to suppress a weary yawn though her greeting at first had been warm. Beyle was in torment. He thought of running away, like a child trying to get away from its own shadow; he felt quite ill. At last Madame Curial's disposition became a little more balanced. She adopted a routine which made the regular five-minute meetings easier for her, but when Beyle, tormented by an ardent and not at all regular emotion, brought disorder into his mistress's regulated life, she was at first surprised, then indignant and then made scenes, being most unhappy in the very moments when Beyle loved her most and when, as it seemed to him, he was giving her real happiness. He would go away for three or four days, but with every step away from Paris, with every turn of the coach wheel he realized how wild jealousy was taking possession of his heart, how his mind was working feverishly in one direction, how everything was becoming poisoned and bitter. Most often he would return when he had gone half-way; sometimes, having arrived at the appointed place, he would force himself to be firm and even the most terrible suspicions of a jealous lover could not turn him back. But on no occasion did he stay away the whole number of hours and days that he had intended. Precisely in those moments when apparently all his passions and jealousy had abated, when he calmly took to reading the mischievous letters of Mérimée, he would suddenly feel a terrible urge, spring up and rush recklessly back to Paris.

The struggle began again when he entered the quarter where Menta, as he called Madame Curial, lived. It ended in the defeat of Beyle. Then there was a struggle when he entered the street, beyond the corner of which the porch of her house jutted out—then there was a second defeat and finally the hardest struggle of all—when he took his hand off the door-knocker three or four times.

And then one of these days he was victorious. After some sharp and caustic correspondence, in an endeavour to bring about a reconciliation, he made an appointment to see her. He did not remember exactly which had happened first: his decision to go away from the door without knocking, or his meeting by the vestibule with Alberthe de Rubempré, who called out to him: "You don't recognize me, Monsieur Beyle?" He had in fact seen her only a couple of times, and her ardent looks had not had any effect on him. But this time he happened to be going the same way as Alberthe. Going too far in their conversation, they went still farther in their conduct. Alberthe would not consent to let him go without giving him tea. The tea gave place to a kiss, without a single word of love, without the slightest hint of genuine sentiment. Beyle remembered his first exploits in this field, when he was fourteen and read the book *Félicie ou mes Fredaines*. The next books were even more outspoken. *The Porter of the Chartreuse* and *The Recollections of Saturnin* plunged him into a state which he had not known till then. But that was a long time ago; how often afterwards, returning from a tipsy revel

with his friends, he felt a dangerous wild animal within him, and how often on the third floor of the house in the rue Neuve du Luxembourg he struggled with this wild animal and pacified his passions by reading a book and stubbornly trying to get his mind to work. Yet it gave him pleasure to be aware of the presence within him of this huge and powerful animal and to feel the extraordinary sensitivity of the nerves.

Alberthe lived in the rue Bleue. Hence her nickname Madame Azur, and it was under this name one evening in the restaurant of the "Frères Provençaux" that Beyle described to his friend Mérimée the whole story of his liaison with this woman. At times she dazzled his eyes like a bright sun, at times she was like a thunder-cloud, but in either case she was unbelievably depraved. Mérimée listened to all the details of the way in which these two bestialized creatures passed the time, and he pretended that the stories of his older friend did not make the slightest impression upon him.

A month passed. Cold partridge, champagne and fresh bed-linen—the three things which made up the hours and nights in the black bedroom with cushions on the floor at Alberthe de Rubempré's—ceased to shut out the image of Menta. To Métilde it was a very far cry—this was the only ikon of the atheist. All the threads of his best work, cleverest ideas and most serious, intense occupations were linked with the memory of Métilde. But the easy excitability of the nerves and the great cordiality and good nature of Madame Curial were nevertheless something which a lonely man doomed to a wandering life could not do without. He did not want to return to Menta. He would rather go on suffering than undergo the first ten or fifteen minutes of a conversation, which anyway would lead to nothing except self-deception. But Madame Azur in the rue Bleue had not seen Beyle for a long time. She wrote to him that she was bored and wanted new varieties of fun and games. Beyle went. As he was dressing after spending an hour with her, he noticed on a table in the corner a blue Indian shawl, that was strangely familiar, but he could not make out where and when he had seen it before. Then, mastering his embarrassment, he asked in an absentminded voice: "Listen, l'Azur, where did you get that azure shawl?" She blushed and said that a woman friend had given it to her.

"What is her name?" asked Beyle.

"Her name is Anna, but you don't know her."

Going along the street, Beyle wondered why this Indian shawl had suddenly made him uneasy, and all of a sudden the word "Anna" reminded him that he had seen it at 52, rue de Lille, in the drawing-room of Anna Mérimée, the mother of young Prosper.

"My God, and I told Prosper all my adventures with Alberthe! Yes, but he paid no attention to them," he replied to himself.

"All the worse for you," he again said to himself and to settle his doubts he began to stride rapidly in the direction of the rue de Lille.

Clara, as Beyle nicknamed Prosper Mérimée since the day his *Théâtre de Clara Gazul* was published, was at home. "She" looked at "her" friend with some surprise, not knowing what had upset him.

"Listen, Clara, it seems you have been going pretty frequently to the rue Bleue?"

Mérimée burst out laughing.

"Listen, dear tutor, you described her to me so well that I wanted to taste her myself."

"Listen, Clara, let me have her for a couple of weeks."

"What?" exclaimed Mérimée. "What did you say? For two weeks?"

Beyle, not realizing the absurdity of his position, gave Mérimée an imploring look.

"Take your treasure for two thousand years. I give you my word of honour, I won't turn up in the rue Bleue and won't come anywhere near your Azur. Her stockings come down when she's walking."

Beyle now realized the absurdity of his position, especially at Mérimée's words, which were purposely spoken in the Grenoble dialect. Then, quickly mastering himself, he said: "All the same it is imprudent to give things belonging to your mother to such nice persons as our Alberthe."

"I agree with that, dear tutor, but bear in mind that I am not so lucky as you, and when I said to your Azur that in a woman I valued most of all spontaneous feeling, she asked with real spontaneous feeling: 'And what do you value spontaneous feeling at?'"

"Yes, you had no luck," said Beyle. "Since you've raised the price, I'm inclined to cease the visits to the rue Bleue, and now let's go and dine and drink some Burgundy."

"Willingly," said Mérimée. "I see you need to restore your physical balance, since you have come from there."

"Perhaps," replied Beyle.

"Not perhaps, but yes. At your age such experiments do not pass without leaving their traces."

"And at your age too," replied Beyle.

A quarrel began which lasted all the way, an exquisitely caustic and subtly malicious quarrel, which for these two wrangling friends took the place of the snacks to tickle the appetite before dinner indulged in by the well-fed and the bored.

In reality it was merely a blind. The older man with caustic witty expressions tried to distract the attention of his companion from the refined and keen vitality which went into all his experiences. The younger man with a feigned cynicism tried to cloak his passion for literature and his school-boy veneration of Beyle.

"Come now, own up, Clara, what other gypsy ideas are being cooked in your brazier?"

"From the brazier comes a smoke, in which nothing is visible. Yesterday I saw Marshal Marmont and was at his place with my father. He told us about his stay at Ragusa, the Slav coast of the Adriatic, the local mountaineers, the dulcimers and Dalmatian songs. They are a strange people, and it seems to me that among them are to be found precisely those characters which attract you with their energy."

"Yes, but that is the energy of Asiatic savagery for which I have not the slightest sympathy," said Beyle. "What attracts me is the energy of the French of the epoch of the Henris and the energy of the present-day Italians, people of an ancient culture which has not ruined, but merely enriched their character. This spring in Rome I realized how strong was the yoke of reaction in Italy, and at the same time I learned which persons were forging this yoke. There is not a single family, whose members belong to the same party. When the father begins to speak at table about the events in the north, one can see how the son and daughter turn pale with anger. The eyes of the wife blaze with hatred. The younger son—who sides with his father—drops a brief remark,

and his brother and sister glare at him and say nothing. It is like that everywhere. Of course it is not like that among your savages. I hate them as I hate Russia."

"But you used to talk about the heroism of that people."

"What heroism?—it is the patience of an ass. I remember when the French captured the Cheverino redoubt, the Russians died in hundreds, but it was rather the indifference to life of men who gain rest in place of suffering."

Mérimée asked for details of the story of the Cheverino redoubt.

"Try to tell that story and they won't believe you," said Beyle. "We have a false idea of war. Try to tell something that refutes the official versions and they'll call you a liar and slanderer."

"I'll try," said Mérimée. "I'm not sure of success, just as I'm not sure of the success of *Cromwell* and I'm not sure of the success of our joint comedies."

"I, too, have lost interest in them," said Beyle. "Although of course after the comedy played in the rue Bleue, we might not quarrel over the *Histoire Evangelique*."

"You know that a law has been issued imposing the death penalty for sacrilege," said Mérimée. "For that reason alone we shall probably not be able to finish the story of Christ in love with Magdclene and the beautiful youth John at one and the same time."

"Well, the theme is historically justified. Caesar, Alexander and fifteen Popes of Rome had male favourites, in spite of the laws, and in any case they certainly committed sacrilege, if the chastity of the priesthood is to be regarded as something sacred."

"That is a rather free interpretation of the present law. It would be interesting to know how many men would have to be executed in Paris itself. Anyway, all my experiences in that sphere were concerned with laymen. The monk's cassock makes me shudder."

"I had no idea that our theoretical arguments would lead to a practical treatment of the subject," said Beyle ironically. "I think you slander yourself, you are too young for Socrates and too ugly for Alcibiades—forgive me, my friend, for being so frank."

"Add to that that I am not so rich as a Commissariat official of Napoleon's army, so that even for money I cannot get what the Lord God sends to others as a gift of heaven," retorted Mérimée.

"You are giving vent to unheard-of insolence. You know that I was never an *intendant* of Napoleon's army and, even while I was director of supply at Smolensk, I did not feather my own nest and had no regrets about it."

"Well, for the purchase of the products you so imprudently mentioned, it seems there was no need for you to feather your nest."

"Let's put an end to this talk," said Beyle abruptly. "They're a very long time serving us with dinner. By the by, tell me, please, is there any truth in the story that a young woman, Aurore Dudevant, I don't remember her pseudonym, suffered badly at your hands?"

"You're referring to George Sand?" asked Mérimée.

"Yes. Everybody says that your leaden hand left its mark on her shoulder."

"My hand had nothing to do with it," said Mérimée with a smile.

Beyle's answer was a smile.

"It is all over now and for good," said Mérimée after a silence.

"Well then, in that case let's start on a new dish," said Beyle, drawing his plate closer.

For a while the two friends dined in silence. In the intervals between the dishes Mérimée turned over the pages of the *English Review* and raised his eyebrows on reading a paragraph from the anonymous "Recollections of an Italian nobleman."

"How remarkable!" he exclaimed. "What lucid prose this is! Perfect Voltaire! Name even one man in France who writes so simply. The English are far ahead in the mastery of style!"

Beyle took the book, read contemptuously the place marked with a finger-nail and closing the book in silence, tossed it aside.

"Listen, dear tutor, doesn't that gesture betray the basest envy?"

"It does not, because the article happens to be mine: I do not contradict Foscolo, who ascribes to me in the *Westminster Review* the honour of being the author of *The Memoirs of Casanova*. But here everything is clear even without Foscolo."

Mérimée said nothing. For the first time in his life he felt the colour mount to his cheeks, and with big gulps of red wine tried to justify the blush to himself.

This time Beyle was master of the situation. He gave his friend the opportunity to blush to the roots of his hair. He pretended not to notice Mérimée, he masticated his food calmly, methodically, as though he were entirely engrossed in the delightful activity of the gourmet. At last he asked: "Well, Clara, you didn't finish telling me about your pranks with Marshal Marmont. Bear in mind that he is shortly leaving for your cursed Russia. The Tsar Nicholas of the north has just suppressed a rising of the Russian Carbonari, as you have read in the *Revue Universelle*. He has executed his enemies and is now assuming the diadem of an oriental despot. To mark the occasion Charles of France is sending Marshal Marmont to St. Petersburg."

"Actually, I have no need of Marshal Marmont. I wanted the Slavonic songs he spoke about. On his advice I obtained them in the Arsenal library. An enormous volume describes the strange travels in the western Balkans of the Abbé Fortis. Then I got from Marmont the little book of Chaumette de Fossé who was consul somewhere at Banialuka. . . . As for the Russian rising, I have only a very vague idea about it."

"It seems to me that this time the Russian rising is fundamentally different from the old upheavals that took place in that country. Not long ago I met at the Stroganovs a girl whose fiancé and uncle were subjected to terrible punishments in Russia. They were prominent people of their class and splendid representatives of educated Petersburg. On my last trip to England a few months ago I went again to Richmond, where I very much advise you to stay: it is one of the most beautiful places on earth. There my companion Rossetti, who was once a Carbonaro and is now a peaceful poet, pointed out to me a tall, well-built man with curly hair in a blue frock-coat. He was Nikolai Turgenev, a Russian conspirator and one of the most dangerous. He managed to escape to England. Rossetti told me that Turgenev was expecting from day to day the decision of the British Government about handing him over to the Tsar. The northern bear is a terrible monster."

Mérimée paid no heed to all this. He pretended he was listening, but in reality his eyes were constantly turning in the direction of a woman who came in on her husband's arm and was looking distractedly for a vacant table. Beyle stopped talking, breaking off in the middle of a word, and assumed an inscrutable expression. Mérimée paid no attention to it.

"Tell me, Clara, who's attracting your attention—he or she? They are both good looking."

Mérimée suddenly recollected himself.

"I don't know the woman's name," he said, "but the fame of my rakishness is so great that when they offered seats in the coach to her and to me not long ago, she refused to ride with me."

"Well, she was quite right of course," said Beyle. "I've heard more than once that even by breathing the same air with you in a diligence a woman gets herself in the family way."

"Really! I call that a very cheap witticism."

"That's the second time you've made a wrong appreciation to-day, my friend. The first time you praised my short notice in the *English Review* and refused to admit the existence in France of a man who was a master of style; the second time you say my witticism is cheap. It remains for you the third time to do something silly like the journalist Jourdain, who spent a long time carefully translating four of my articles from English into French with a dictionary. But what was this lady afraid of? In any case she is guaranteed against scandal by the presence of her lawful spouse."

"Well, enough, dear tutor, enough," interrupted Mérimée. "You have taken sufficient revenge on me for the Indian shawl. It only remains for you to tell my mother about whose shoulders it has fallen on."

"Oh! That's a good idea! I'll go to Madame Mérimée at once and tell her everything."

"No, you won't do that, in any case you won't find me there."

"I'll do it and I'll be very grateful to you for not being there."

Without saying good-bye, Beyle jumped on to the footboard of a passing cab and left his friend who strode off in the opposite direction.

## CHAPTER THIRTY-THREE

AN HOUR OR SO LATER MÉRIMÉE WAS CONVINCED THAT BEYLE HAD NOT BEEN to his house. With a sense of relief he went to the rue Caumartin and in the little garden he asked the tall, good-looking Madame Romanée for some beer.

"Has the professor been to-day?" asked Mérimée.

Madame Romanée smiled artfully and said: "As always, he spent the night at my place and left early. He had a quarrel here with somebody, it seems, with that Italian Corner."

Lingay, Mérimée's professor, was Madame Romanée's lover.

"What could they have quarrelled about?" wondered Mérimée. "What is there to divide them? Corner is a Venetian, formerly aide-de-camp and friend of the viceroy of Milan, Prince Eugene, and now a forty-year-old drunkard who has squandered a huge fortune in a foreign country. Lingay is a clever journalist, who writes to order for various Ministries. In 1815 he very cleverly published at the right moment a brochure extolling the Bourbons. The Minister, Decazes, sent for him, gave him the post of political writer and a salary of six thousand francs. Lingay became an excellent connoisseur of political intrigues and gossip, a dangerous journalist with many names. There is no reason why he should quarrel with Corner. Corner would agree to anything in any case."

These considerations were interrupted by the unexpected appearance of Beyle.



"What, you here, Count Gazul? I can never get away from you."

"You are not trying to very hard. Did you not want to go to my mother?"

"I've been there," said Beyle.

"I didn't see you there," replied Mérimée.

"In that case you have very bad eyesight," said Beyle. "But perhaps I really haven't been there?"

Beyle looked at his grey-jacketed companion attentively, remarking on his ugly nose and small eyes which never lost their malicious expression. There was something cold, malicious and prickly about him.

"And this is the man who has become my best friend," thought Beyle, "this Mérimée, this Count Gazul, whose letters give me so much real joy, in conversation is devoid of the slightest hint of cordiality and kindly feeling. One thing is certain—he has enormous talent."

Mérimée went on drinking beer in silence. Looking at him, Beyle continued with his thoughts: "Why not believe with Buffon that *we get from our mothers some uncertainty regarding the genuineness of our paternity*; if the mother rouses no doubts, it is only because nature has surrounded maternity with very serious material proofs. But of all the men who are in the house or encountered outside, whom can one really name as one's father? Léonor Mérimée has a most agreeable disposition, great cordiality, the frank and noble manner of old times. Madame Mérimée has a remarkable wit, purely French, and is a woman of very rare intelligence. The same characteristics appear in her son, only greatly accentuated. Like his mother, he is not capable of saying anything pleasant more often than once a year. I find this dryness in his literary experiments as well. We shall see what the future will bring. In any case there is nothing worse than this alliance with Lingay, though in other respects a very useful man: before going anywhere one should always ask Lingay which women have any influence in the town, which are the reigning beauties and which money-bags pull the strings in the town. He knows quite well how to reply to all this, but in all the rest he is a sort of vaudeville prompter who appears under various names in various newspapers to the order of various ministers and writes different things for various sums. Will Mérimée be able to escape this cheapening of his mind and talent? The conversion of rhetoric into sheer falsehood, the superficiality of views and the complete hollowness of sentiments covered up with brilliant phrases—what can be worse for Mérimée, if he becomes a writer?"

"Clara, so it's Lingay who draws you to this place!"

"There's no better beer anywhere in Paris."

"You know I find it hard to get used to Paris, its beer, its professors of rhetoric, its Spanish comedienues."

"But why should you get accustomed?" asked Mérimée, suddenly looking hard at Beyle. "The other day, as I had no hope of getting the book from you, I bought the new edition in two volumes of your *Rome, Naples and Florence*. I know of no man who would be so capable of wiping out the whole false image of Italy, which has bored everybody, and of restoring its real bright colours. One must possess a very free mind and infinitely more acumen than the ordinary traveller to liberate oneself from age-old falsehood and mawkish sentiment, to conquer so easily and quickly with the pen that country which has been described a hundred times and yet remains as unknown as before. What do you want Paris for? What can this mutilated form give you, these pieces of a broken vessel; when you trample on them you know quite well

that they are the remnants of things once beautiful? I regard you as a conquistador, who has found his eldorado and a race of human beings which has what is most precious—a wealth of talent and a happy variety of energy.”

“I suppose this is his pleasant remark for the year,” thought Beyle, but he did not laugh and showed no emotion.

“Listen, Clara, it is not a question of me but of you. If you are seriously thinking of writing, what do you need Lingay for?”

“Oh, don’t talk to me of Lingay. He is a most pernicious person, but the best teacher of mystification.”

“But are you going on mystifying for long?”

“I am,” replied Mérimée, nodding his head with a stubborn look.

“You appear to be mystifying yourself. But tell me, how do you account for Lingay’s attachment to Madame Romanée?”

“There is no attachment, but you will agree that after spending two hours on writing an article persuading the French that the Bourbons are charming, he has to get rid of his excess of hot blood somehow! So he looks around for some respectable women of the people. But he is small and ugly. You must admit yourself that with his Spanish temperament the situation is rather difficult for him. The matter has usually ended quite simply: after the third visit with a five hundred franc note the women usually forgot that he was ugly and saw only the big five hundred franc note. He grew tired of this. He decided to spend three thousand francs at one go and bought Madame Romanée from her husband, who, when he received the money, went off to the south and opened a café there. Lingay was here in the morning and, according to Madame Romanée, had a quarrel with Corner. I fail to understand on what ground the interests of these two men can clash.”

“Well, after all that you have said, it is astonishing that you cannot understand it. The drunkard Corner is nevertheless amazingly handsome, and Madame Romanée is evidently not devoid of good taste. She can’t spend the whole of her life on Lingay alone. Corner is at present a crestfallen man. In Paris he is a white crow. Nobody understood his open-handed ways, his carelessness about money. There was nowhere for his nobility and bravery to display themselves. But all these traits make him inexpressibly fascinating. Take a look at him, he is a typical figure from the brush of Paolo Veronese, and he received the cross and order of the Legion of Honour from the hands of Napoleon himself. I knew them as far back as 1811.”

“What do you mean by them? Did you know Lingay in 1811?”

“No, I’m talking about Corner and another man, a captain of the Venetian Guards, Count Vidmano. I was still very young then. Vidmano and Corner became my friends, in spite of the fact that I took his mistress away from him. The most amusing thing is that in the Kremlin in Moscow Vidmano begged me to make him a senator of the kingdom of Italy. In those days I was regarded as the favourite of Count Daru, my cousin. Vidmano was greatly offended when I refused. I could not explain to him that Martial Daru was not only indifferent towards me, but did not even like me. By the by, I’ve just remembered, at four o’clock in the evening on 19th September, 1812, Corner said to me: ‘But is this damned fighting never going to stop?’ This remarkable phrase was so unlike all the martial bombastic hypocrisy of the French, that it was enough in itself for me to become his friend. With most of the French the veneration for war and the display of readiness to fight were often united with cowardice. In Corner reckless bravery was united with a contempt for

war as upsetting and disorderly. Well, you have finished your beer, it seems? Where shall we go now?"

Mérimée thought over his reply, as he went with Beyle towards the exit. Just by the gates they ran into a tall man, who almost knocked Mérimée's hat off his head with an awkward gesture. He apologized. Beyle took him by the arm:

"What wind has blown you to Paris? I thought you were in the provinces collecting your damned taxes."

It was Crozet.

"I've already been in Paris a week, and as you don't want to know me . . ."

"Wait a bit," said Beyle.

He went after Mérimée.

"Forgive me, dear Clara, but I have serious money matters to attend to."

"We'll meet in the evening at Pasta's," said Mérimée, waving his hand.

"Listen, Crozet," said Beyle. "Are you rich to-day?"

"No more than usual," replied Crozet drily. "In any case for the publication of books . . . not a sou!"

"But I wasn't behindhand with the last promissory note, was I?"

"It is only for that reason that I consent to talk about money. How much do you need?"

"I need eight thousand for a year. I want to go to Milan and start on a work there that will bring me money."

"Your work will never bring you any money. I regard you as a very clever man and a good talker, but you are a literary failure and Mongie complains that only ten Parisians who despair of life can read your books."

"Anyway I've found a publisher to print my novel."

"Then, either he is a fool or you have really succeeded in writing something interesting."

"Of course I have, but that does not prevent the publisher from being a fool. You must admit yourself, Crozet, that a publisher must always be rather stupid."

"What is your novel called?"

"I don't yet know exactly, I think of calling it *Le Salon Parisien*, but I shall probably call it by the name of the Russian girl Zohiloff—*Armançe*."

"Who is she? Some Russian postwoman with whom you fell in love during the Moscow campaign?"

"No, not at all. She is a ward of the Stroganovs; the fiancée of a Decembrist, who appears to have been killed."

"Ah, so that's it! Well, come and see me to-morrow morning and we'll have a talk in detail about the money."

"But why not to-day? You know your Praxède<sup>1</sup> doesn't like me."

"Well, to-morrow she is going out to buy a hat."

"Then you must be rich! I know Praxède's tastes: if she buys a hat, then you must have become a millionaire."

Crozet smiled.

"But all the same I haven't any money at present."

"Well then, let me sign a promissory note. If you have it in your pocket, I know you will search all over Paris and find the money for me."

"Very well then, sign away. Are you going away for long?"

"I'd like to go for ever. I can't reconcile myself with your Paris and I hate France with all my heart."

<sup>1</sup> Madame Crozet.

"France is no worse and no better than other places. One can find good and bad everywhere. All that matters is being at peace with one's self."

"You are in a pedantic mood to-day. I shall be at peace with myself when I am in Milan again."

Crozet looked at him earnestly, then produced a scarlet leather wallet, took out six thousand-franc notes and with a grave, important look handed them to Beyle in the form of a fan.

Beyle immediately took out of his pocket a well-worn wallet with the inscription "*Ricordo*"—a souvenir of Angela Pietragrua—or rather, a reminder that he must not think any more of that Milanese Juno. She had given him the wallet together with assurances of her tenderest sentiments on the eve of the day when he had been able to convince himself of her infidelity.

"Perhaps you will write to me from Milan?" asked Crozet.

"I promise," replied Beyle. "But remember that literature is a lottery. Petrarch was all his life writing *Africa* and imagined that this was the work that would make him famous. In leisure moments he wrote his sonnets, to which he attached no importance. I am sure that now there are few people who have read or even know the name of Petrarch's principal poem, but the little sonnets have made him universally famous. So we shall write a good deal. One does not know what will survive!"

"Well, I wish you more of the 'sonnets' and less of *Africa*," said Crozet, holding out his broad hand to Beyle.

Thus a casual meeting solved the painful crisis of the last few months. Again—"the most gracious thing in nature—Her Majesty Chance. Life is short and nevertheless very sweet. Beyond its borders there is nothing, not even regret about it, so let us live!"

"The cab is hired for hours. First I'll drive home (the manuscript has already been taken to the publisher), then to the office of the *Messageries*—to Laffitte's. The diligence leaves in an hour's time, the time-table has been altered. Heavens, what happiness! Good-bye, Monsieur Mérimée! You won't see me at Pasta's. That nice woman is my good friend: I used to rest at her place with her mother, old Rachel; we could talk for hours about the ways of preparing Milanese risotto. Try to spend the evening there without me. The key is with the concierge. A little trunk, books thrown into the body of the yellow coach with silver posthorns on the doors. Six passengers sit outside; two with the postilion, four persons inside the coach, which is delightfully roomy, the soft leather seat has evidently been re-upholstered recently. The windows are open, the smell of flowers from the garden mingles with the delicate, sharp smell of the Paris dust. Above the city is a boundless blue sky. It is a sunny day. Nobody in Paris will be any the wiser for a week or two. I'll write to Pauline at Grenoble on the way. I'll write to Clara from Milan. Life is short, but sweet!"

The paved roadway came to an end, the coach drove noiselessly along the dusty way, creaking from time to time at the turnings. The postilion's whip cracked over the leading horses. The smart coachman had twined flowers in their manes; one wondered in celebration of what? The red-haired head of the postilion looked in at the window and shouted to the passengers: "To-day Laffitte's senior coachman got married, so the horses are getting double rations and flowers in their manes, and the men are getting double work."

## CHAPTER THIRTY-FOUR

AT MARSEILLES THE BRIG "COMET" WAS BEING FITTED OUT AND TO-MORROW SHE would hoist her sails at dawn and leave for Naples. Till then, rather than roam about the streets of the port town, the best thing was to go for a walk to the banks of the shady Huveaune, over which hang green trees stretching their ivy-twined broad branches from bank to bank. Beyle walked along the street, where once upon a time was the office of Charles Meunier. Now it was a dwelling-house. The posts of a wooden bed were visible in the window of the room, where twenty-two years ago had sat the twenty-two-year-old Henri Beyle, clerk in a grocer's shop, ex-officer of Dragoons. And now here was his apartment. Perhaps the window was still intact on which Mélanie Guilbert had scratched with a small diamond of her ring their names "Henri" and "Mélanie."

On the River Huveaune there was no change in the sand bank, where he used to sit and watch Mélanie coming out of the water after a bathe, laughing and splashing, and throwing sand at him; she would ask him not to detain her even for a minute, as there would soon be a rehearsal at the theatre. Here, too, on this sand bank he had read Mélanie the letter from his grandfather at Grenoble:

"At a time when the young men of France are fighting in the armies of Napoleon, who is being crowned in Milan with the crown of the kingdom of Italy, you, a good-for-nothing loafer, spend your time behind the counter of a grocer's shop and all because you had the misfortune to get a pretty actress with child."

Beyle remembered for the first time about the little girl, who was not his child, and how he had tried to take the place of father to her right up to the departure of Mélanie and even after she was abandoned by that terrible Russian landowner Baskov.

He wanted to write down an idea that had come into his mind. He took out the first piece of paper he could find; it turned out to be a letter from his publisher.

Monsieur [he read], I should like very much to have reached the time when I could give you an account of the profits which I expected to have from your work *De l'Amour*, but I begin to think that the time will never come. I have not sold forty copies of your book, and I can say the same thing of it as of the Sacred Poems of Pompignan: they are sacred, for nobody touches them.

Yours faithfully,

F. MONGIE L'AINÉ, publisher.

A look of annoyance passed over Beyle's face. The idea he had wanted to write down vanished from his mind. He experienced a reaction to his Paris impressions. With a feeling of depression and weariness he returned to the hotel. In the yard a French and an Italian sailor, surrounded by a crowd of inciting onlookers, were circling round striking out at each other, revealing four or five millimetres of knife from under the thumb. Both were drunk and filling the air with wild shouts. Their gashed faces and torn clothes were covered with blood. Pulling down the blinds, Beyle tried to go to sleep before the evening came on; he tossed about a long time, then got a bottle of wine and started drinking. Soon he was in a state of heavy and gloomy intoxication.

Early in the morning, sitting on a huge coil of rope, he watched the sailors at work in the rigging. The brig was dancing on the water; the captain at the steering-wheel shouted into his megaphone to the sailors on shore to hurry up with the loading of the last barrels. Ten minutes later the ship's boat was hoisted on board, the anchor raised, and with a quick and beautiful turn the brig got under way and, ploughing the water and scattering foamy spray, sailed out of the port with a gentle roll. The warm, caressing breeze did wonders with the men and the sails. Beyle felt his cheeks burn, his blood freshen, his heart beat rapidly and gaily and his lungs breathe with a delicious fullness, which he had not known for a long time.

In conversation with some passengers who boarded the ship at Genoa, Beyle learnt that they would call at the island of Elba.

Immediately he became another man: the lightness and mobility of the Milanese citizen returned, as did also the boldness of the Vilna fugitive and the resolution of the young dragoon, who found himself in the green valley of the Mincio at the height of the battle, when a flash and a puff of white smoke came from every bush. All his Italian impressions surged up at once. Without asking how long it would be till the next ship, he decided to disembark on Elba. He must see with his own eyes the cage, from which, in the words of the Venetian newspaper that wailed about the "misfortune" of 1815, "the lion escaped after breaking the bars."

Night was coming on, the wind was getting stronger, and a full moon was shining, by the light of which the sea took on an amazing blueness. The air was transparent but not hot. The brig cut through the water, sending sparkling foam from under her stern. The long shaft of moonlight on the water was like a silver flame; on either side of it were blackish-blue streaks. Beyle sat on deck and dozed, leaning against a mast. He dozed thus till dawn. Then he went below, washed, had a chat with the sailors, drank a glass of red wine which he bought from the cabin steward who doled out wine from a small barrel, also bread and small fishes. The sun was still low in the sky when they neared the island. The brig abruptly rounded a cape. Beyle looked over the side of the ship and saw transparent pinkish molluscs irradiating all the colours of the rainbow, and huge jelly-fishes; the water was thick with floating seaweed. Round the bend appeared the little island of Scoriotto and, on a high rocky hill, the citadel of Portoferraio. The ship stood in the roadstead of Portoferraio. On the top of the steep hill appeared a puff of white smoke, and a moment later came the thunder of a cannon shot. The brig took in sail. Half an hour later Beyle was on shore.

On 4th May, 1814, an ordinary row-boat from the same Rio Ferrajo had put out to meet a warship and ferry ashore the sovereign of the isle of Elba, Napoleon, the abdicated Emperor of France.

"It will be an island of rest," said Buonaparte. "I shall live as justice-of-the-peace Buonaparte now that Napoleon is dead."

Thus the ancient Ilva—a desert island of salt works and iron mines of the epoch of the Roman Empire—was turned into the chamber of justice-of-the-peace Buonaparte. He had been deprived of everything with the exception of the territory of the island, which from a small sub-prefecture of a Mediterranean department became an independent State. But the justice-of-the-peace did not spend a quarter of an hour after landing in the house set apart for him. He put on an old riding habit and without resting after his journey set out to inspect the island. Going round the roadstead, he saw the valley of

San Martino with its bright foliage, vineyards and the slopes of the mountains covered with grey olive trees. Pointing to the smallest of the houses, he gave orders to have it adapted for his permanent residence. Then he went to inspect the weirs and salt works, mines and vineyards, and in the first week explored every corner of the island.

The "justice-of-the-peace" did not think of writing an account of the European events in which he had participated and which he had initiated. The British Commissioner noted with amazement his keen activity as master and administrator and his curiosity about every duty, even those entrusted to the youngest of the gardeners or the palace watchman. His indefatigable energy showed itself in everything: in the new structures, the re-equipment of the port, in the military exercises with detachments of Corsican tirailleurs, guardsmen, gunners and sailors, a battalion of the old Guards and a squadron of Polish Uhlans. Buonaparte's entire army did not exceed one thousand six hundred men.

Beyle made arrangements with a peasant and drove without stopping at Portoferraio to San Martino. Memories surged up in him with incredible force. Only six years previously this "justice-of-the-peace" had died on another island after a fresh attempt to thrust himself upon Europe by exploiting the hatred of the Bourbons. And how bitter his death must have been! Beyle recalled that towards the end of his stay in Elba Napoleon had been short of money. The secretly imported sacks of gold, which were the result of Buonaparte's thrift in his personal expenditure, soon melted away. The sums promised him by the Allies were not sent. And moreover, a whole series of personal blows induced Napoleon to make the venture. "Here in this place," thought Beyle, looking at the post office, "the letters from Vienna were intercepted. In spite of the treaty, they would not let his little son come to Elba: Metternich and Alexander thought that he would be 'too much like a prince-*héritier*' there. They left him in Vienna to make a bishop of him, or at most a 'royal prince.' It was along this road that the impatient justice-of-the-peace had gone out to meet the British Commissioner, who was bringing the post. He glanced through the portfolio, flung it to the ground and said with a tremor in his voice: 'My wife has not written to me for more than a month. They have deprived me of my son; they have taken him as they do princelings and hostages among savages to drag behind them for the adornment of the conqueror's suite. And this is the new Europe!'

The Emperor Franz devised in Vienna a method of fighting based upon the subtlest Jesuitical casuistry, the resourcefulness of the executioner. He did not tell Marie Louise, a weak and frivolous woman, that she would never see her husband. He gave her promises that raised her hopes and exhausted the small stock of will-power which this insignificant but by no means bad woman possessed. The solicitude with which she was surrounded was like a cotton-wool wrapping, such as would not quite suffocate her but was enough to get her used to the absence of fresh air. In the enervating hot-house atmosphere of the Viennese Court she was confided to the care of a young gardener, the chamberlain Neuperg. The Emperor had sent for him and explained his complicated duties. With tears in his eyes Franz said that the malevolence of the European monarchs obliged him not to allow his beloved daughter to go to Elba, that he had paid enough for the impious union of his daughter with the Corsican bandit, but that of course Marie Louise, who was now known as the Duchess of Parma, would not cease to be his beloved daughter. Therefore, she

must be saved. "On your skill and talent," said Franz, "depends the young woman's peace of mind. It is your duty to help her to forget France and the King of Elba. Your task is to satisfy all her whims and not to waste time surmising about her wishes which she herself will find hard to express. In short, you will go as far as the circumstances and the place of your conversation permit. You understand that your duties do not include anything of a political nature."

After these instructions Marie Louise very soon stopped writing. At first she wept at the necessity of having to conceal what had happened from her husband, and then she did not write in order to repeat what had happened without any further hesitation. Buonaparte was furious. He was then forty-five years old. And in February Fleury de Chaboulon, who like Henri Beyle was an *auditeur* of the Council of State, went to San Martino by this very road and, as it appeared from Beyle's conversation with the peasant, in this very carriage. He informed Napoleon of the two conspiracies in Paris and the condition of France. Buonaparte decided that the moment was favourable, that hatred for the Bourbons had reached boiling point and that it depended on him to bring about an explosion by proclaiming to the troops and the peasants that the interests of France and Buonaparte were identical. Buonaparte's face was inscrutable when he held out his hand to the *auditeur* in farewell. But a few days later, on 26th February, 1815, at eight o'clock in the evening, one thousand one hundred men embarked in ships. The sailing craft formed a line, at the head of which sailed the brig *Inconstant*; little ships had sailed earlier and carried Napoleon's proclamations all along the coast of France. During the night Buonaparte's flotilla slipped without lights past the British patrol vessels. At midday on 1st March the anchors were lowered in the Gulf of Juan, and almost immediately a bivouac was made in an olive grove on the road from Cannes to Antibes. A reckless operation was begun: a march along bad roads, past Catholic, Bourbon Provence, straight along the Alpine paths to Grenoble. The dangerous parts were traversed before dispatches from the south could be delivered in Paris. A whole army was unable to find the tracks of the pirate who was marching along the roads of France. The most dangerous moment was the first encounter with the troops. The Corsican tirailleur officers demanded a swift attack on the vanguards. Buonaparte advanced to meet the units sent against him with a small detachment of old soldiers carrying their muskets with the barrels downwards. He went up to the battalion of Paris soldiers who had him under cover, and heard the voice of Captain Randon of the 5th Regiment of the Line say: "That's him! Fire!"

The musket barrels flickered, no shot came. Buonaparte walked unarmed in front of the detachment. His neckcloth was fluttering on his shoulder, his collar was unfastened and his hairy chest was exposed to the wind. The test turned out to be too strong. This failure of the French Command had immediate repercussions. Napoleon entered the town of Grenoble.

"Ah, Grenoble!" thought Beyle. "In the history of this town there are some remarkable pages. It has disgusting bourgeois and very interesting peasant types. In the family of a village carpenter there will suddenly spring up a youth with proud, heroic eyes, furious energy and great will-power. Where does it come from? And how many years does it take to reveal itself? In 713 all the environs of present-day Grenoble were settled by Arabs and later on by Italians. The fifteenth and sixteenth centuries—the epoch of civil war—produced amazing characters not to be found in the north of France. Sometimes in the clash of



everyday events the ancient qualities of a man suddenly flare up and transform him."

"We've arrived, signor," said the peasant. "You can stay at my place."

It was fine August weather. Beyle explored with curiosity the paths, ascended Monte Capona, inspected from there the two bays, Portoferraio and Porto Longone, gazed at the blue outlines of the cape on the continent with the fortress of Piombino, and spurring his little horse, crossed the San Martino brook in the valley of San Giovanni, which was in flood with the August rains; then he usually rested beside the fresh-water spring of Acqua Bona. From memories of Napoleon he soon passed to criticism of his hero.

Napoleon's second attempt to gain power now appeared as a clear and logical deduction from available premises. The bourgeoisie had hated the Bourbons; the peasants, who had been given the lands of the nobles, feared the return of the old proprietors. The aristocratic broom had swept away all the supporters of the idea of the new France, all who sought a way out from the aristocratic blind alley facing the country. Louis XVIII himself had seen the danger in this return to the past, but was unable to do anything. Rotten, disintegrating alive, he had become a corpse long before the functions of his heart and vital centres ceased.

After him on the crest of the reactionary wave appeared Charles X. The outlines of the subsequent events were already clear by 1st March, 1815. Buonaparte's operation did not succeed. The bourgeoisie wanted to exploit the workers of France in peaceful conditions, but Buonaparte brought once again the spectre of a military-bureaucratic monarchy. Nothing, of course, could result from it. Checking up on himself and his impressions, Beyle thought how right he had been in his scepticism about the "Hundred Days." He remembered how he had been calmly eating an ice in the Café Florian in the Piazza of St. Mark, more engrossed in chasing away the pigeons coming after crumbs and the upsetting of a plate on the white cloth than with the report from France.

After he had lived on the isle of Elba for a week, Beyle ceased to think about Napoleon. From the fresh water of Acqua Bona he gradually crossed to the eastern shore of the island, to the hills of Monte Serrato, where the best wines of Italy were made. All the questions of the old Buonapartist were unexpectedly solved at Monte Serrato: his thoughts about the shipwrecked life of Beyle, the Commissaire des guerres, evaporated together with the light fumes of the wine.

"However, it's a fairly long way to Milan," he thought, realizing that he had grown tired of Elba. Italy lay before him once again. He knew that he would see the same houses, the same sunlit squares, the same triumphal arches and columns, and at once was invaded by a deathly pang at the thought that he would not see the same people. He experienced a feeling of actual, real death. He realized to what an extent the idea of purgatory was Italian. All the images of Dante were borrowed from the real, everyday world of Italy. The purgatory and hell experienced by the exile of Ravenna were absolutely real in a life which, in cruelty, surpassed the fantasy of Dante; only the pictures of a radiant, many-sphered paradise were the fine needle of imagination of a dying man. The Frenchman's dispassionate mind could no longer endure the struggle with his passionate emotions. Beyle was afraid of Rome, afraid of Naples, afraid of Florence, and Milan appeared to him as the scene of a happiness beyond recall.

*Armance* was now being published in Paris. Had he succeeded in painting a picture of the extinction of aristocratic France? Would anyone understand the character of Octave de Malivert? Would not the French regard as offensive the superiority of the Russian girl, who displayed as much firmness of character and as much genuine warmth of heart as Frenchwomen could not accumulate in their hearts in a whole century? Octave's suicide was the logical result of the situation in which the "brilliant" class of France found itself. The Duchesse de Broglie, who was on the look-out for "rebellious minds," was the double of Sophie Svietchina, the pupil of the Jesuit de Maistre, and a rabid Jesuitess who preached hatred of the memory of Byron, whom she quite sincerely regarded as one of the most terrible manifestations of the demoniac on earth. What a dreadful odour of mysticism came from her salon! Now, of course, *Armance*, that sweet young woman, the unfortunate bride-to-be of a handsome Russian officer, was already in some Catholic nunnery. Beyle wondered how his novel would be received—the first attempt of a man of forty-four to write a work in the style of "*belles-lettres*," as it was now the custom to call it, after Monsieur Stendhal had written exclusively travel sketches and musical criticism. After all, France was not confined to the circle of people who were rotting at the roots and were doomed to die out. France was like a huge natural laboratory in which new forces were being distilled. If a bourgeoisie had arisen which was driving the French noblesse from their positions and striving after profits instead of the old ideas which created culture, then the whole of *poor France* was suffering from the oppression of this bourgeoisie. He would have to investigate the characteristics of this class.

Beyle set out with the next schooner that entered the southern port of Longone. It sailed round the islands day and night, and stopped not far from the Bay of Naples. Beyle decided that his place of residence would be the island of Ischia. None of his memories was connected with this island. To him it stood outside of history. There were no ghosts of his heroes on it. He lodged with the simple numerous peasant family of Casamiccio and soon the fugitive from Paris did not recognize himself. The past was as though it had never been. On the island were a peasant's hovel, a small farmyard, goats and a multitude of hens, to which at dawn citizen Beyle scattered handfuls of corn from a small sieve. The hens cackled, sat on his shoulders, crowded round him and eagerly pecked the corn. There was a good supply of goat's milk, fish, cheese and wine. He made attempts to help the peasant in the work of the farm and chatted with the children and fishermen on the shore. All of a sudden he began to wonder what significance the early loss of his mother had for him. Mérimée lived with his mother. Madame Anna Moreau had painted the portrait of the five-year-old son with a loving brush. "Mérimée does not realize all the difference between his childhood and the formation of the character of a child, who was hated by his father and deprived of his mother at the age of seven." This was his only recollection of Mérimée. In the evening he would go off to the deserted rocky part of the little island and watch the sun sinking into the sea.

So the time went by till the days when flocks of birds began to appear, flying from somewhere near Moscow to the coast of Africa. Beyle observed the flight of flocks of cranes which ceased before sunset, and watched the silvery light on the highest shining clouds die out. Then he went by the darkening path towards the gleaming light of a fisherman's hovel and exhausted by his walk along the cliffs fell into a deep and dreamless sleep.

At Naples, threading its way among the boats and numerous ships, Beyle's little boat moored at the custom-house. The customs officer refused to accept a bribe, glancing uneasily towards the far end of the corridor, where stood a fat gendarme, puffed up like a cockerel. Beyle had to open his luggage, turn everything out, and leave all his books for inspection. He was told to come for them in three days' time.

"Why so long?" asked Beyle.

"The Signor has books in incomprehensible languages."

"Incomprehensible be damned! English, German, French and Latin."

"We have a new staff in the custom-house and there is nobody who knows these languages."

"If nobody in the custom-house will read these books, why are you afraid that they will be dangerous with me in the hotel?"

"Signor, it is not our business to judge. Take your receipt for forty-seven books and don't waste my time."

Beyle shrugged his shoulders and drove off in fury to the hotel. The city was crowded with merchants, and the hotel was full. There remained the Hotel de Russie right opposite Castellamare.

"No, not 'Russie' for anything," said Beyle.

"*Una stanza non cara!*" somebody shouted.

Beyle called the owner of the cheap room, handed him his trunk, and was soon driving in a rickety carriage with a broken axle tied up with a piece of ship's cable through the streets of the seething, tumultuous city, which looked as though it were in the throes of a revolution. The drive lasted almost an hour. Beyle entered a wooden building with a creaking staircase that threatened to collapse. The door of the room would not lock. The filth was terrible. An unbearable stench came up from the yard. Through the open window a woman wearing nothing but a shirt could be seen slapping a boy's face. Washing hung on strings stretched right across the yard. The windows of the upper storey of the opposite house were closed with green barred shutters.

"*Casa pubblica*," said the guide, indicating with a gesture the closed windows.

"Thank you, I don't need a '*casa pubblica*,'" said Beyle with a laugh.

The *stanza non cara* turned out to be monstrously dear. The proprietor demanded six francs a day. Beyle haggled and offered three quarters of a lira. They agreed on a franc and a half with board. Beyle asked for clean bed linen. The owner of the apartment swore that it had only just been changed. Taking the sheets and the pillow, Beyle silently flung them out into the corridor. After handing over his passport and refusing to pay a day in advance, he announced that he would come back in the evening.

He dined in a sailors' trattoria and ate *frutti di mare*, a mixture of fish and seaweed, that burned the mouth slightly and provoked a burning thirst, to slake which stood huge flasks of red and white wine.

Italian life began for him. Three days later several books were returned. The priest at the censorship passed Shakespeare, but confiscated the collection of Rossetti's poems and all the French books. Beyle swore and even used the expression "priestly rabble," but the young beardless Seminarist who listened to him meekly with his hands crossed on his breast and his eyes closed remained inexorable. On the way back an elderly clerk came after Beyle.

"Signor, give me three liras and your address. You'll get your books."

Beyle halted.

"In what way?"

"I am the book executioner. The confiscated books are handed over to me for destruction. You realize that I can't support my family on three soldi a day."

Beyle took out a ten-franc note and said: "This is for my books and any other books you consider it possible to bring me."

In the evening a case of wine, out of which jutted bottles of Genzano, was brought into Beyle's room. The boy porter put his finger to his lips on being given a tip and ran away. Beyle found a whole pile of books and among them the confiscated collection of poems by an unknown poet, Giacomo Leopardi. Beyle read:

*O patri mia, vedo le mura e gli archi  
E le colonne e i simulacri e l'erme  
Torri degli avi nostri,  
Ma la gloria non vedo,  
Non vedo il lauro e il ferro ond'eran carichi  
I nostri padri antichi . . .<sup>1</sup>*

He read on till late in the night. In the morning he left for Rome. On the way he encountered more monks, clergy and men in army uniform than he had ever seen before.

## CHAPTER THIRTY-FIVE

BEYLE ARRIVED IN ROME AT FOUR O'CLOCK IN THE MORNING. THE GREY AND pink haze gradually melted, revealing the houses, and the sun quickly warmed the cold, wet streets. Beyle felt feverish. After drinking coffee he made for the Corso and went into the first chemist's shop he could find. The tall, lean chemist, who looked like Mephistopheles with his pointed little beard and turned-up moustaches, gave him some quinine. Beyle asked for some water, dissolved the powder, went over to a mirror with the glass and, looking into the mirror so as to keep from grimacing, drained it at one gulp. The chemist smiled. They started to talk and Signor Manni, the chemist, turned out to be a very witty conversationalist.

"Why has the Signor come to Rome?" were his first words. "You won't cure with quinine the French fever that you are suffering from. You all have this burning desire to come to Italy and admire the pictures. This fever eats up your money and gives nothing in return."

"You are right," said Beyle. "But I have got beyond the age when one follows the fashion."

"You understand, some sort of madness has come over Europe. I approve of the Catholics, who having nothing else to do come to look at the Pope, but what do you see in these pictures? For the sake of what do you get jolted about in the diligences and spill the money out of your pockets? What do you find here? Well, you'll go to the Barberini, and in one room you'll see the Madonna and two saints, in another—two saints and the Madonna, in a third—the Madonna with the Holy Child, in a fourth—the Holy Child with the Madonna, in a fifth—the Laying in the Tomb, in a sixth—something else in that line. It's enough to make you die of boredom. A whole army of young

<sup>1</sup> O my native land, I see the walls and the arches and the columns and the statues and the lonely towers of our forefathers, but the glory I see not, I see not the laurel and the iron which our fathers bore of old . . .

men has sprung up, who write verses about the antiquities of Rome. Who wants these antiquities, when we have not got a single textile factory, when we import cloth from Antwerp and other textiles from Liverpool or Lyons?"

Beyle wanted to laugh, but nodded his head and said: "Yes, yes, you are quite right."

"What is present-day Italy?" continued the chemist. "Take me, for instance. I wanted to become a lawyer, but I could not do it without getting into the opposition. I am not the type of man to spend my time in prisons, and I don't want to be a mere sheep either. I want to live and I know how to live, but listen to this: in 1815 I graduated from the university of Pavia; the Emperor Franz arrived, our professors welcomed him and the Emperor replied: 'Gentlemen, I have no need at all of writers and savants, educate loyal subjects for me.'"

"That was well said," replied Beyle. "But at Naples . . ."

"At Naples," interrupted Manni, "Canosa, the Minister of Police, expressed the same idea to the King of Naples. Don't talk to me about Naples. I tried to begin my career there. I myself heard the Minister welcome the King with the words: 'Your Majesty, let the executioner be your first servant, the merciful Lord God created hell to punish sinners. Follow His divine example, execute without hesitation. One of the causes of the revolution was the excessive diffusion of education. We have no need at all of savants, we need good, peaceful men, who are prepared to live, trusting themselves to others and letting the world go its way.'"

"And did you become a good, peaceful man?" asked Beyle.

"I became a chemist."

"For the good of Italy?"

"Italy is a geographical concept!" said the chemist, shrugging his shoulders.

"I live in Rome and try in vain to cure the French of their picture fever."

"Well, we'll meet again," said Beyle.

"I don't advise you to be ill," replied the chemist. "But when you have had enough of your pictures, come and have a chat about living people. At six o'clock in the evening, before the shop closes; some quite lively people will be here by then."

"Peaceful ones?" asked Beyle.

"Yes, in any case far more peaceful than those who hold up the diligences on the eastern roads of the Romagna."

"Very good, I'll come," said Beyle.

The plenipotentiary of the French Government, Monsieur Lamartine, had left for Florence. Beyle was unable to see him. A few days later he learnt that the whole personnel of the Milanese police had been changed.

"That means they won't bother me," thought Beyle.

The nights were cold, but in the day-time the sun blazed with almost summer intensity. Walking along the new Via Sardegna to the Pincio, Beyle felt the heat of the midday sun and crossed over to the other side, in the shade. There he was suddenly gripped by a terrible chill that penetrated to his bones. These ominous and deadly Roman chills seemed to him to portend a dangerous fever. His blood became sluggish, his temples ached, his eyelids were heavy. He decided he would have to go away.

He went round his favourite spots as usual on the day he took his seat in the diligence. A few hours before his departure he went to the Janiculum and sitting beside an old oak-tree a few paces from Tasso's tomb, reflected on his

wandering life; in the furious hurry of a diligence he was trying to grasp the present and to fix its transient and elusive images.

In Florence Monsieur Lamartine was charmingly kind, but as usual sad and reserved.

"He is a typical lyricist," thought Beyle. "The pines of Savoy are constantly rustling in his soul. He hears the voice of his native country only in the sounds of nature. He doesn't understand anything except poetry. How did they come to make him a politician?"

At the luncheon in the little dining-room with its mosaic floor and round mosaic table Madame Lamartine was present, taciturn, cold and disdainful. All of a sudden Beyle felt a longing to upset her. They began to talk about French affairs, and Beyle spoke with purposeful indignation about the restoration of the right of primogeniture. He called this law "an outrage against the equality of citizens." He said that the whole of France had been sacrificed to the interests of eight thousand nobles. He was highly indignant at the law compensating the fugitive émigrés with millions of francs—"alms which will cost the life of a whole generation of children." And throwing scruples to the wind, he told all about the incriminating material against the Jesuits which had been collected in Paris by the deputy Montlosier.

Lamartine replied tamely, but Madame Lamartine, on the other hand, suddenly losing her coldness, began to rebuke Beyle. He brought up the question of the Press: the publication of a book in France was beset with such financial difficulties that it was incredibly expensive to the author.

"How are you going to publish your poems now?" Beyle asked Lamartine.

The poet was chewing a piece of bread with a melancholy look and seemed to be wearied by the intemperate speech of the southern Frenchman.

"In any case he will not publish them under somebody else's name!" his wife replied for him.

Beyle took his leave.

In Venice it was raining and misty, but it was warm. The rain, like a net, hid the golden domes of St. Mark. The little tables were placed underneath the arcades of the Procuratie. The empty piazza seemed enormous, especially now the thousands of pigeons were not obscuring the stone flags but cooing under the cornices. Venice gradually began to have its effect on Beyle. A week later he could no longer grapple with himself. In vain he read books on the history of the city and stood for hours before the paintings of Tintoretto; the world melted and ceased to exist. The Venetian water, the Venetian sky, the houses on the canals, the great stillness, the absence of horses and carriages, the people walking almost inaudibly along the edges of the deserted *calli* and canals—all this excluded the possibility of his return to the other life. But he would have to go back to France. Already at Bologna new plans and schemes had sprung up. Venice was unable to weaken the fire of his Beylism. He used this term more and more frequently. But the difficulty was that to get to France from Venice he would have to pass through Milan. That, of course, was the whole question.

In the last days of December 1827 Beyle began to suffer from fits of deep melancholy and the firmer his resolve not to go to Milan, the greater was his sense of physical indisposition. At last his struggle exhausted itself. At his wits' end he drove along the wintry roads of Lombardy, scarcely looking out of the windows of the diligence and hardly knowing what he ate or where he slept. He was in a sort of delirium and the decay of the yellowed vegetation

of Italy gave him a sense of his own decay. They drove in at the Northern Gates. The moon was covered by clouds. It was almost dark; a chilly mist hovered in the streets. Napoleon's triumphal arch had been completed by the Austrians. The inscription "*Alla valorosa armata francese*" had been removed by the stone-masons. Midnight came; the bells were striking twelve when the porter came out with a lantern and flashing it rather rudely in the traveller's face, took his baggage and carried it up the stairs of the little Hotel Adda. The room was peaceful and cosy. Beyle had a wash. During this ceremony the porter came and asked for his passport. Beyle handed him the document, finished washing, changed his clothes and with his heart beating rapidly left the hotel and walked along the familiar streets to the Piazza Belgiojoso. He had purposely refrained from putting up at the Hotel San Marco near the post office so as not to awaken memories that had been slumbering for seven years. But connected with the Hotel Adda were also memories of the stay in Milan of Sergeant Henri Beyle of the 6th Regiment of Dragoons.

There was a dead stillness in the streets. The Piazza Belgiojoso opened out before Beyle's eyes. In the night it seemed to him to be enormous. A mist was rolling over the flags of the pavement. In that misty moonlight the grey houses with the black shadows of the windows and the closed doors seemed dead.

"It is this Ossianic weather that makes the piazza so dreary," thought Beyle. His thoughts were lucid and his feelings calm and sad. He fully realized that with Métilde his life would have passed quite otherwise. After all, he had loved her far more than he was able to admit to himself. Striving all through his life to prove to himself his light-heartedness and his right to fickleness, he was in reality a genuine, and perhaps the last, representative of romantic sentiments and for that reason he no longer loved anybody. He walked slowly back to the hotel. The porter was not asleep, and the anxious proprietor informed Beyle that the police had been making inquiries about him and requested him to go and see the commissioner at once.

"Yes, but I want to sleep," said Beyle.

"I cannot help that, Signor. If you don't fetch your passport from the commissioner, I shall immediately order your things to be put into the street."

Swearing in Russian, Beyle went to Santa Margherita. The convent which had been converted into the headquarters of the gendarmerie of Lombardy was not asleep. Beyle was immediately conducted to the police-station commissioner with great courtesy. Hiding a yawn with the palm of his hand, this polite, apathetic individual asked Beyle to sit down and sat down himself. Then, spreading out Beyle's passport, as large as a sheet, on the table, he put his elbows on it and dropped his head in his hands.

"You are Monsieur Beyle?"

"Yes."

"You are from France?"

"Yes."

"Why did you not go by way of the north?"

"I am travelling for my pleasure. It determines my route for me."

"I am afraid you will soon have to do without it."

"I don't understand you," said Beyle, turning pale.

The official stood up, leisurely opened a safe, took out a thick dossier, rummaged in it and began to read. Then he asked: "You don't know who Monsieur Stendhal is?"

"I have no idea."

The official's eyes brightened up and lost their sleepy look. He gazed at Beyle angrily.

"You don't know the writer Stendhal, and at that same time you ask permission to stay in Milan for two weeks?" he asked.

"What has that to do with me?"

"You wrote to the proprietor of the Hotel San Marco and asked him to find you an apartment and that you were going to settle in Milan for good?"

"Yes, but I got no reply."

"This is your address in Paris: 3, rue Neuve du Luxembourg?"

"Yes, that is my address."

"And you assure me that Stendhal and you are different persons?"

"Yes, and I also assure you that on my return to Paris I will see that the Austrian Embassy sends you a reprimand for this nocturnal interrogation."

"And you can sign a statement that you do not know any Monsieur Stendhal, that the books *Rome, Naples et Florence*, the books *Racine et Shakespeare*, and the book *De l'Amour*, in which you write insolent things regarding our regime, are not your books?"

"Yes, I can sign such a statement."

"In that case, write it down."

The official handed him some paper, an ink-stand and a goose quill. Beyle dipped the quill in the ink.

"But bear in mind that if to-morrow morning your statement turns out to be false, you will be confined in the prison of Santa Margherita, in the same cell in which your friends were incarcerated seven years ago."

"This pen is in a disgusting state," said Beyle, making a huge blot.

"What's the matter with it? Here, take this one. Write as I dictate."

Beyle pulled up his chair, took the quill and began to write under the gendarme's dictation without looking into his steely pupils:

I, the undersigned French subject, Henri Beyle, writing under the name of Baron Stendhal, undertake to leave in the direction of the Simplon by the first mail-coach that sets out and in any case to depart from the confines of the possessions of His Apostolic Majesty not later than twenty-four hours from this second hour of the night of 1st January, 1828.

"You have forgotten to put your signature, it seems?" said the gendarme calmly, putting the paper before Beyle again. "I wish you a good journey!"

Beyle descended the stairs, then went back and said: "You have given the hotel proprietor such a fright that he may throw out my things if I go back without a visaed passport."

"Oh, that need not worry you in the least. There is no need for you to remain in the hotel for a minute. The Simplon coach leaves at four in the morning. In the hotel you might oversleep yourself and cause yourself a lot of inconvenience. If you like, you may rest here on the divan."

Beyle was absolutely furious, but if he had known that seven years ago, on a similar night, only two hours later, a dispatch had arrived from Vienna condemning citizen Vismara to the gallows, he would probably have felt much more at ease. After thanking the official for the offer to spend the night in the police-station, he walked along the streets with a feeling of disgust, seeking in vain for a vetturino. At the hotel the porter shook his head and for three francs agreed to carry Beyle's things to the other end of the city, where at six o'clock



in the morning the travellers took their seats in the diligence which set out daily for the Swiss lakes. Beyle was tired out when he arrived there. A street furnace was scattering sparks, a boy was blowing up the flaming coals with a pair of bellows, a bearded smith was clanging on the anvil. Beyle sat down on his baggage in the waiting-room. The sleepy owner of the diligence came into the room and announced that there would be no service as the diligence was broken and the smith would have to work till midday.

Beyle decided to tell a lie.

"What am I to do?" he said. "My money and documents have been stolen, I have only enough money for the journey. In Como I shall be wealthy again."

"Spend the night here," said the Milanese with unconcern. "It will cost ten liras."

Beyle almost refused to pay the ten liras, but fearing to rouse suspicion, he lay down unconcernedly on the straw mattress that was offered to him.

The departure took place a day later. In spite of the delay nothing happened to Beyle.

The young gendarme came off duty. He wrote the Director of Police a report on the appearance in the Lombardo-Venetian kingdom of Henri Beyle, whose name was registered in the special card-index as a dangerous atheist, a French revolutionary, an enemy of all law and order, and who stubbornly denied his identity with the atheist writer Stendhal.

"The above-mentioned Beyle," wrote the Director of Police after receiving this report to the ruler of the Lombardo-Venetian kingdom, "departed during the night of the same day, when he received the order to leave Milan. He set out for France by the Simplon road, without venturing to appeal to Your Excellency personally for permission to remain in the city and revealing obvious signs of a troubled conscience. During the time of his brief stay in Milan I had citizen Beyle kept under secret observation, which gave no occasion for any special remarks. In the evening Beyle was at La Scala theatre. Measures have been taken not to lose sight of the above-mentioned Beyle and to arrest him in good time, should he venture to appear again within our borders."

Milan was closed to Stendhal for ever.

## CHAPTER THIRTY-SIX

BEYLE WAS PLEASED AT THE THOUGHT THAT HE HAD NOT CORRECTED THE MILANESE gendarme who mentioned his old Paris address. From the shores of Como he wrote to the rue Richelieu "Opposite the Bibliothèque, Hotel Lillois, No. 63." When the letters arrived, a pretty hand opened the envelope, took out the sheet of paper with its description of Beyle's encounters and impressions in Italy and then with a majestic gesture laid the letters down on a little mosaic table that stood on the blue carpet in a corner of the room. This woman with the enormous eyes and the gestures of a queen, poorly dressed but beautiful, was the famous artiste Pasta, one of the finest singers of the beginning of last century. She had recently become a friend of Beyle. The free manners of the artistic world made it possible for him to visit her at any hour, and as he was tired of the sullen looks of the porter who opened the door at three o'clock in the morning, he decided that he had better move to the Hotel Lillois so as not to disturb anyone. This explained his change of address. Madame Pasta's husband would smile craftily when he met him in the corridor of the hotel,

and twit him kind-heartedly when he encountered him in the drawing-room. Old Rachel was very much pleased at the move, as Beyle was the only one of the visitors who could talk to her about Milan for hours. Milan was her native place. She had reared her daughter, the future singer, there. Two weeks after the move Beyle's reputation was badly shaken in one of the salons of Paris, that of Madame de Tracy. Seeing Beyle in a new suit one day, Madame de Tracy said in a loud voice: "How well dressed you are to-day! Ah yes, last week Pasta had a benefit performance!"

Pasta willingly received Beyle, but their relationship was purely a friendly one, and in any case Beyle did not receive any money from her. The gossip merely made him laugh. His letters to Pasta were most cheerful.

One might spend weeks on end by Maggiore, Lugano and Como, but Beyle's literary activities were not bringing in anything and his money was getting short.

Looking through the rough drafts of letters and the jottings on scraps of paper about old and new Rome, the anecdotes related by the chemist Manni and jotted down on the recipe of a black dye for the hair, prepared by the same chemist at the request of Beyle, who was going grey, the traveller planned at the same time a story about the Italian Carbonari and a book of sketches under the title of *Promenades dans Rome*. And as he could only write the book in Paris, to Paris he must go.

On 23rd March, 1828, Beyle was already in the rue Richelieu. He tapped on the door of his neighbour. Madame Pasta was in the country with her family. The porter gave Beyle a letter from Mérimée. It was a series of acute literary questions set out with all the clarity peculiar to Clara. His nickname Clara was doubly appropriate: Clara meant clear. He asked about *Armance*. People were talking about the book in Paris, but it was being given some very peculiar interpretations. The Duchesse de Broglie recognized herself in Madame de Bonnavet and was indignant. Also they could not understand whom Beyle had described under the name of Octave. The Stroganovs were indignant at the portrayal of their young ward.

"I do not altogether understand the failure of Octave de Malivert as a lover," wrote Mérimée. "You seem to have kept something back. Admit that your Octave suffers from a partiality for persons of his own sex and therefore runs away from women. This is the cause of his suicide, but perhaps he is an androgyne or simply impotent."

"I'll write and say he is right," thought Beyle. "In the present conditions of Paris such an interpretation is more to my advantage. Why tease the geese who want to save Rome?"

In his heart Beyle was very displeased. Such a lack of understanding on the part of a man whose judgment he esteemed very highly showed that a long stretch of clashes with society and disillusionment in his contemporaries was about to begin. True, he was never under any illusion. France could hardly give him any greater disillusionment, but society might invent or unintentionally vary the old annoyances and stings. He would have to provide himself with a protective mask.

During the next few days Beyle reckoned up his resources.

In April 1828 he would be destitute. His entire annual income consisted of his pension and some small honoraria. At present he could spend no more than five francs a day. The Press laws made it impossible for him to take up journalism. The French newspapers were closed to him.

He must try something else. With his hat tilted over his right brow, a cigar in his mouth, swinging his walking-stick with an air of independence, he walked along the Boulevard des Italiens; he was persuading himself that he was quite carefree and not in the least interested in the outcome of the step he was about to take. An hour later he was chatting with Theodore Hook. The Englishman did not refuse to take the last Havana from the cigar-case which Beyle held out to him, and lounging in an armchair began to smoke it.

"Reviews of contemporary French books are of little interest for my English *Monthly*, but if you will provide sketches or articles of the 'Alceste' type, I will set aside ten pages in each number for you."

That was not very satisfactory. Beyle's indifference to the outcome was quite sincere. Nevertheless, when Hook with a smile took out a thousand-franc note, Beyle experienced a certain relief.

He began to write regularly and a great deal too. Criticisms, reviews and articles under pseudonyms began to appear in the English journals. This work took up all the morning and unfortunately hindered him from finishing the *Promenades dans Rome*. Unexpectedly *Armance* brought in one thousand two hundred francs. He could dress properly again and appear in the drawing-rooms.

"The cicada is again chirping in summer-time," thought Beyle about himself, "but now it knows the meaning of winter. Anyway, it is better than being a Parisian, that fly is born at ten in the morning and dead at five in the afternoon. Just try and tell him what night is."

So thinking, he went up to the house of the Academician de Tracy. The entrance door was wide open. An elegant little clock on the mantelpiece struck eight. The chandelier was not yet lit. On a long blue settee which ran round the room from the fireplace to the door leading into the dining-room some young women and girls were sitting in the most unconstrained poses.

"And I thought you had quite forgotten No. 38, d'Anjou Saint-Honoré," said an old man's voice.

An elegant little old man, proportionately built, with a pointed beard and a green shade over his grey eyebrows (in spite of the fact that there was no light in the room) came forward to meet Beyle. This was the master of the house, the famous philosopher, the author of *L'Idéologie*, delightful alike to the young people of France with a turn of mind akin to Beyle, and the Russian Decembrists, who read it with rapture.

Madame de Tracy tried to appear unconcerned, but in her presence Beyle felt slightly annoyed, uneasy, as though desiring to hide some secret, self-condemnatory thoughts. He decided not to attach any importance to this. After a few insignificant remarks, he went over to Charles Rémusat and asked him about Paris. Old de Tracy gave orders to light the chandelier. The beautiful oblong drawing-room glowed with bright lights. The ladies' dresses on the blue divan danced with all the colours of the rainbow, but Rémusat's olive frock-coat lost all colour. Monsieur de Tracy, standing by the fireplace, his elbow leaning on the marble mantelpiece, nodded his approval in reply to his companion's words, as though he were pecking him with the green beak of his eye-shade. He looked like a crane standing on one leg. Amédée de Pastoret, Beyle's old comrade in the Council of State, came into the drawing-room. Just at that moment Madame de Tracy interrupted the conversation of Beyle and Rémusat with the question: "You have been in Italy. How are our poor émigrés living, those who have not yet come back to France?"

At this question Monsieur de Tracy and his companion, Turot, a professor of Greek, looked at Beyle.

"If I were in power, I would reprint all the books of the émigrés, declaring that Napoleon in suppressing them usurped a power which he did not possess. Three-fourths of them are dead. I would banish them to the départements of the Pyrenees and two or three neighbouring ones. I would surround these four or five départements with two or three small armies which, to have good effect, would bivouac there for at least six months of the year. Any émigré who came out of there would be ruthlessly shot.

"Their estates which were returned by Napoleon should be sold in pieces not larger than two arpents. The émigrés would enjoy pensions of a thousand, two thousand and three thousand francs a year. They could choose to reside in foreign countries. But if they went about the world intriguing they would get no mercy."

De Pastoret pulled Beyle by the elbow, being anxious to put a stop to this dangerous tirade. Monsieur de Tracy, who did not like harsh expressions, looked as though he were listening to a musical instrument that was out of tune. The professor of Greek was pulling a long face and by the time Beyle got to the end of his long speech Turot's big jaw hung down like that of an old horse.

"What are you saying, you madman!" said de Pastoret. "The salon is full of émigrés to-day!"

"So much the better," whispered Beyle.

De Pastoret led him out into the passage.

"Listen, I want to talk to you. You must give me substantial help in my heraldic researches; they will give me the opportunity to get fixed up in a post."

Beyle retained his absentminded look. "Poor de Pastoret," he thought. "He could tell a good many stories, if he took it into his head to write his memoirs. He has had the same experience as the Generals of the old army of Napoleon, who tried by all sorts of base tricks to enter the salons of the Faubourg Saint-Germain. A description of these humiliations would fill a volume. De Pastoret is a miserable figure, who suffers from a thousand pin-pricks, precisely pin-pricks, as the humiliations which he has to submit to come from the wives of the royal gendarmes. People like de Pastoret are under everlasting suspicion. This makes them suffer torments that are unknown even to a salesman in a shoe shop."

"You're so absentminded you do not even answer me," said de Pastoret. "I want you to help me in my search for a subject for new coats-of-arms and also in another serious matter. Can you do it?"

Monsieur de Tracy came up with mincing steps, holding in his hand a little book in a yellow binding. Screwing up his eyes, he interrupted de Pastoret and waved the little book under his nose.

"Now have a look and guess what this is."

Beyle was glad of the opportunity to get away from de Pastoret. He took the book with an attentive air and went right under the chandelier.

"It is some sort of ethnographical raving," he said. "Why have you got Slavonic songs, and with such a barbarous word as *Guzla*, too?"

"Who do you think is the author of that work?"

Beyle looked at a portrait and said: "Some savage, Mag . . . Maglanovich."

"But I assure you that it is not Maglanovich, but your young jester Prosper Mérimée."

Beyle was astonished. Beyle was vexed. In the depth of his heart he doubted whether Mérimée could have published this strange little book at Levrault's in Strasbourg.

De Pastoret came up again.

"You haven't answered my question."

"What was it?" asked Beyle.

"It is absolutely secret. News has been received of the death of Pope Leo XII. You understand, the King desires that the head of the Church should be a man, if not devoted, at any rate not opposed to the interests of France. Do me a great favour. Give me a secret description of the characters of all the Roman Cardinals. Can you do that?"

Beyle said slowly: "Yes, I can do that, but you must bear in mind that it all depends on the composition of the Conclave. I was in Rome in the winter and did a good deal of work. You know how much I want to save the tourist from archæological enthusiasms. I studied contemporary Italy and I studied the documents of Papal Rome. I can help you."

Beyle's evening usually consisted of not more than three or four visits. From Madame de Tracy's drawing-room, which he left early, he would go on to Baron Gérard, the artist. There he found Cuvier and his step-daughter, Sophie Duvaucel, who lived in the Jardin des Plantes, Monsieur and Madame Polycarpe and Virginie Ancelot, who had been at the coronation of Nicholas I in Russia two years ago and were always talking about their Russian impressions and praising the writer Bulgarin. Doctor Koreff and the publisher Buchon would also be there. Madame Ancelot made fun of Buchon for his unsuccessful attempt to learn Italian. The young woman teacher refused to carry on her lessons with him. A fading beauty, Virginie Ancelot recited with comical seriousness a couplet from Don Juan about its being pleasing to be schooled in a strange tongue by female lips and eyes.

"Buchon envied our friend, Prosper Mérimée, whose attempts to master the gypsy language are going brilliantly. But his didn't turn out at all well. He tried to kiss his grammar but she slapped his face."

"In such cases the only thing to do is to repeat the experiment in the hope of better results."

"You evidently take the standpoint of the Gospel," said Buchon. "I have only two cheeks, and both suffered simultaneously."

"I think the cheeks of the woman you kissed suffered far more," said Madame Ancelot.

"You flatter me," said Buchon.

"I don't think so."

"The good which one does without thinking is undoubtedly more pleasant."

Meanwhile Mérimée came into the room. Beyle put him next to Buchon. Mérimée took a handkerchief out of his pocket with an air of complete imperturbability; Buchon showed signs of excitement.

"Look," said Beyle, "can one compare them?"

"Apparently somebody has got to be hurt," said Buchon.

"Not I, to be sure!" declared Mérimée. "But explain what it all means."

"It is a question of who has more right to a woman's slaps."

"Oh, I have, of course!" exclaimed Mérimée. "I don't even understand why I did not get them at once."

"And Buchon doesn't understand why he got them. The whole point is that he unsuccessfully tried to imitate you and wanted to learn Italian by your

method," said Madame Ancelot, addressing Mérimée. "And if I am permitted to appreciate this attempt from a woman's point of view, in my opinion, Monsieur Buchon has more grounds for such an attempt than Mérimée."

"One must judge by results," said Mérimée. "Buchon, when you want to become a consul with the gypsies let me know and I'll teach you how to master the gypsy language immediately. But remember one must never begin with the cheek, because it will immediately be reflected on your own."

And in the general laughter Mérimée walked away from Buchon and took Beyle by the arm.

"Clara," said Beyle, "you have definitely gone off your head. What did you want to publish all this Slavonic rubbish for, with vampires, dulcimer-players and all the other diabolical jibber-jabber? Is it possible that with your intelligence and powers of observation, with your store of factual knowledge, you were unable to choose something better?"

"It is well for you to talk like that, the voluntary wanderer and wealthy traveller. . . ."

At the word "wealthy" Beyle waved his hands sadly and grimaced.

"But what about me, without money and without a position in the country?" continued Mérimée. "If I want to travel in Dalmatia I can only do it on the money that this book will bring me."

"Forgive me, dear friend, but you write that you have already been there, you describe localities in which you have never once set foot and impressions which you have not experienced."

"But how can I do otherwise?" asked Mérimée.

"In any case it is a bad book," said Beyle. "Your *Guzla* is as bad as your Spanish stories are good."

"I wanted to bring you some other things of mine, but it was impossible to find you at home. Every morning in the week the porter says you have already gone out, and in the evening that you have not yet returned."

"Yes, the porter gets an extra tip for that, otherwise it would be impossible to finish the work."

"What are you writing?" asked Mérimée.

"Several things at once," said Beyle. "So many that the day isn't long enough."

"Yes, one does not even meet you in the Boulevard des Italiens. I tried in vain to find you at Madame Pasta's. At one time they even gave a peculiar interpretation to your disappearances."

Beyle waved his hand without showing any curiosity.

"I have a lot of debts. I have to work a good deal to pay them off. That is the chief reason for my absence. By the by, what has happened to Etienne?"

"Which Etienne?" asked Mérimée.

"What? Has Delécluze been divorced?"

"No, I thought you were asking about a celebrity of Paris these days—Etienne de Jouy."

"Ah, that rascal?"

"Why?" asked Mérimée. "He is an Academician; he is a remarkable writer; he is considered to be Voltaire's successor, a genius lighting the path of our century."

It was impossible to tell from Mérimée's cold eyes whether he was laughing or talking seriously.

"He is a typical bourgeois," said Beyle.

"Who? Who is a bourgeois?" said Mareste, interrupting the conversation as he came up and holding out his hands to both of them.

"I want to explain to this boy," said Beyle, indicating Mérimée, "that the Academician de Jouy is simply a petty scoundrel, whom nobody will remember in ten years' time."

"I happen to be the fortunate owner of a most eloquent literary work of de Jouy's," said Mareste, taking out of his cigar-case a scrap of paper folded in four.

It was a petition addressed by de Jouy to the Bourbons immediately after the downfall of Napoleon, asking the King to bestow upon him, de Jouy, the cross of St. Louis "for helping to bring about the downfall of the Corsican."

"But how is one to explain his present liberalism?" asked Mérimée.

"He has been trading in that commodity for a long time. When Napoleon was in Russia, he was already doing business with liberalism, and then, taking offence because the Bourbon ox did consent to give him a bribe in the form of a cross, he assumed the pose of a noble citizen. His real name is Etienne, he is the natural son of a big merchant. He ran off with money from his father, volunteered for a regiment that was stationed at Versailles and went to India. At first he adopted the name of Etienne de Jouy, then the Etienne was dropped. He became Captain de Jouy and some ass made him a colonel. He was very handsome and traded on his looks. The chief customers of his bank are old ladies. In India he and a fellow officer entered the pagoda of a town to get away from the heat, and there, losing no time, he violated some priestess or other by the very altar. She cried out, not very loudly it is true, but quite loud enough to bring the armed guards running in at the conclusion of the enterprise. The Hindus did not attack de Jouy himself—he disappeared—but his companion who had nothing at all to do with the affair. While still alive they cut off his hands and feet and then hacked him in two. De Jouy took advantage of his companion's predicament, leapt on to the dead man's horse and galloped away. Afterwards there was published in Paris a lyrical tragedy by Monsieur de Jouy under the title of *La Vestale*. Before winning fame in intrigue and literature, de Jouy was secretary-general of the Brussels prefecture. He lived in the apartment of the Prefect Pontcouland on the friendliest terms with his chief and under the same blanket with the latter's wife. Now the rascal, relying on the bad taste of the bourgeoisie and the curiosity of the Germans, has really believed for five or six years that he is Voltaire's successor. He has even put up a bust of Voltaire in his house near the Trois Frères. And here is Mérimée admiring the beast," concluded Beyle in a rage.

"The Romantic *littérateurs* regard him as the ornament of the age," said Mérimée.

"Then your Romantic *littérateurs* have not the intelligence even of this scoundrel!" shouted Beyle, at the same time not forgetting to take a glass of punch from the footman's tray. He took a sip, clinked glasses with Mareste and said: "To the enlightenment of Mérimée's head!"

Mérimée lowered his glass.

"I refuse to be enlightened," he said. "You are too quarrelsome to-day. You have abused *Guzla*, now you are abusing de Jouy, it only remains for you to abuse my new friend, Victor Hugo."

"I can't keep up with your new friends."

"And one has to listen to all this," continued Mérimée, "from the author of the manifesto of the Romantics, from the man whom we have been accus-

tomed to believe. I wanted to show you *La Jacquerie*, but I am terrified even to think of it. You are devoid of the most elementary sense of justice. After all, what does it matter if Jouy was kept by old women?"

"I demand of a *littérateur* that he should not sell his pen, and the fact that he sells his . . ."

Beyle broke off the unbecoming sentence just in time: Madame Gérard looked at him with stern eyes as she passed the group. All three became silent. The mistress of the house went to see that everything was all right in the salon. Beyle's shouts, as usual, were beginning to alarm her.

"After all, to go back to your *Guzla*, don't you realize that the heroes of your ballads are conventional puppets, that they are untalented actors in an alien dress, that they have no character? Do you think that mere romantic idealization or even plain colouring is capable of making a literary work interesting? I quite understood, when you tried, in *Cromwell*, to break the classical conventions. It is ridiculous to see the clock pointing to twelve when four o'clock in the afternoon has already struck. But tell me, who is going to be interested in your peasants and shepherds merely for the sake of local colour? Does that prevent your characters from being boring? When all is said and done, *Guzla* is local colour. Do you think that the bowels of a Serbian shepherd with a dulcimer are so very different from those of an Auvergne shepherd who plays a bagpipe?"

Maresté, while pretending to be listening attentively to Beyle, was counting his five-franc pieces and jotting down the expenditure of the day in a notebook. Mérimée looked at his friend without blinking. Beyle took a drink, pointed to Maresté with his finger, grinned and went on:

"You talk of *La Jacquerie*. *La Jacquerie* is an excellent thing. Everything in it is in the right place. You have a healthy materialism, you understand the secret springs of human actions, you describe in an excellent manner the motives of the conduct of your heroes without bothering about the banal views of present-day Frenchmen. There are characters, there is energy in the work. I underlined with interest in my own copy (you need not bring me another) the scene in which the peasants forsake the rebel forces just before beginning work in the fields. That is just like the peasant; you have understood him quite well. The man who earns his daily bread at the plough depends entirely on the whims of the soil, the calendar and the weather. He is not a romantic earning his livelihood all the year round with newspaper articles or, if you will, living from hand to mouth all the year round, who will go to the barricades any day, in any weather. Townsmen are quite a different race of men; can you condemn the one if you take the point of view of the other? I congratulate you; you have created something beautiful. But why the deuce did you need your Slavonic trash after that?"

"Forgive me, dear tutor, but *La Jacquerie* appeared a year after *Guzla*."

"Well, in that case I am pacified. So it was in the past! If you agree not to return to that rubbish, I too will agree not to return to the subject. The only thing that troubles me is that you have made friends with Victor Hugo."

"Yes, I have," said Mérimée in a tone that showed that he failed to understand Beyle's surprise.

"Was it he who wrote *Bug-Jargal*?"

"Yes," replied Mérimée.

"What abominable trash! Can one write such villainies about a well-born Frenchman, his fiancée and a lot of stupid negroes? So far as I know, Monsieur



Hugo was never a nobleman, but he cringed with great zeal. How much more respectable is his father than this versifier! How heroically Leopold Hugo risked his life in capturing the bandit Fra Diavolo in Calabria!"

Mérimée said nothing.

"To tell the truth, both Rigaud and Toussaint-L'Ouverture were regular scoundrels," said Mareste.

"What's the meaning of this? Mareste has begun to talk," said Beyle. "It is just like a voice from the Bible. What Balaam have you been carrying, dear Mareste? How much have you spent to-day? Don't you grudge the cab fare?"

Meanwhile a woman in a pink dress with wide sleeves, who had been sitting beside the fireplace, rose from her seat. Without answering, Mareste went over to meet her.

"I agree with your appraisal of *Bug-Jargal*," said Mérimée. "If you like, I will present you to Miss Clarnson. A little circle of negrophils meets at her place, and you can hear interesting things there. She has written a pamphlet in defence of the negroes. She knew Toussaint and gives the contents of an interesting letter of Toussaint to Napoleon, when he was Consul. Toussaint wrote: 'To the first among the whites from the first among the blacks.' Toussaint is undoubtedly a heroic figure, and as he is not of royal lineage, his heroism refutes Victor Hugo's opinion that only negroes of the royal tribe are capable of heroism."

The long table of the drawing-room was covered with a green cloth.

"What a pity the card-table is broken!" said Madame Gérard. "Faro will be played at the dining-table."

"The green cloth will slip," said one of the guests.

"And you are to sit still and not touch the feet of the ladies near you," said Madame Ancelot.

"But why do you give me away?" protested the guest. "Monsieur Ancelot may hear us."

Polycarpe Ancelot, whose black hair was parted and reached almost to his shoulders, was talking to a young actress of the Théâtre Français. He was completely taken up with the conversation and hearing his name, glanced distractedly in the direction of the person who had spoken.

"Ah! What?" he asked and without waiting for an answer, smiled again and went on with his exciting and interesting conversation.

Beyle went over to his wife.

"I know quite well why when we meet at the Cuviers' and the Gerards' you have never once invited me to your Tuesdays. You have only Academicians, and you are afraid to change the brand of the wines."

"I am not so timorous," said Madame Ancelot. "But mixing wines has a bad effect on the head. All the same I shall be very pleased to see you next Tuesday. Only please don't make any of your speeches about the émigrés. I've already heard them."

"I promise you I won't talk about the émigrés, but it is a good thing that you did not hear what I said about the Academician de Jouy."

"You know," said Madame Ancelot, "there lives at the house of Academician de Jouy a lad of sixteen, who writes beautiful verse and has a remarkable voice. He is the son of his porter Murger."

"The Academician de Jouy also writes tolerable verse, and if the porter has a pretty wife, the boy's talents provide a direct indication of his origin."

"Now then! You're not to say such dreadful things. The porter is a

widower. The lad lives with his father in a room in the basement. Some Russian . . . Ah yes ! My enemy Yakov Tolstoy, who is often at de Jouy's, is going to send the boy to school at his expense. So you will come on Tuesday ?"

"I shall be delighted, Madame."

## CHAPTER THIRTY-SEVEN

"IT IS THE ONLY CORRECT POSITION !" SHOUTED THE MAN IN SPECTACLES, gesticulating nervously. "One can of course listen to the bawlers, one can do all kinds of stupid things, but that is not politics. In the end the only thing that must be made certain of is the removal of Villèle from authority. Charles X is not an evil man . . ."

"Oh, if only the King knew !" said somebody, quoting the first line of a comic song.

The conversation took place in a hall lighted with a chandelier and furnished with statues, statuettes, benches upholstered in green silk, and wall-hangings of green material.

"The King knows that he needs such a majority in the Chamber as would secure for him the possibility of combating the forces of darkness," continued the man in spectacles.

"You talk rather vaguely," retorted the other. "Why, even the newspaper *Le Drapeau Blanc*, for all its fidelity to the *white colour of the times*, says that *politics have become black*. It is not a question of the King or of his good will, which, by the by, I very much doubt, but it is a question of the Jesuits. Even the *Drapeau Blanc* people consider that the Jesuits will ruin France, that they will lead her into a cul-de-sac, that they are putting the clock too far back and are opening the way to the Socialists by virtue of the law of contrasts. As soon as the black cassock of the Jesuit appears, red flags fly in the working class quarters. In London an anarchist club was discovered quite recently. It is impossible to keep all the safety valves permanently closed. Even the orthodox Catholic Lamennais is under arrest, it seems. Look at what is going on: no measure approved by the Chamber of Deputies and the Chamber of Peers can be carried through without the agreement of the secret Jesuit committee, to use the civic term. Everywhere they have planted their puppets, who act quietly and unobserved. Remove the frock-coat of any Ministerial secretary and you will find a black cross on his shirt."

"All this is sheer raving, the product of an overheated imagination. What can the Jesuits do, who have only seven colleges in France ?"

There was a burst of laughter at this remark.

"Seven colleges !" exclaimed a third man, joining in the conversation. "Do you know what a college is ? Look at the way they work on the human material in these schools, the deadening weight of information with which they overburden the memory of the pupils. Then there is the weekly confession to two confessors who check up on each other, and the obligation to reveal every thought, doubt and desire. Then there is the strict hierarchical system with religious subordination to the superior, the discipline of renunciation of one's own will, the complete sacrifice of one's own desires, if they are not authorized by the Church. Then there is the permission of the system of petty venial sins, forbidden on paper merely in order that the transgressor should feel the need of repentance and gratitude to the Church for its condescension, and finally the purely military tactics and strategy, the purely military intelligence service.

All this has been going on since the days of Ignatius Loyola, who sprang to the defence of the Roman Church against Luther. What do you think? Is not a pupil who has been through such a school a dangerous automaton that carries out the secret directions of the Jesuit order wherever he may be? Will this automaton retain any human traits? Is not the annual output of a single college sufficient to form a centre of infection for the atmosphere of France? And you say there are only seven of these colleges?"

"That's all nonsense," replied the second man, "nonsense suggested to you by Montlosier's pamphlet. It is not a question of the Jesuits but of the Chamber. We need an opposition majority so as to secure the resignation of Villèle."

"You keep on about your Villèle," said the third man. "Do you think that Charles X wants to rely on an opposition majority in the Chamber? Charles X sleeps and sees the whole Chamber dissolved. He dreams of a medieval, feudal France and a Court of Chevaliers of wealthy landowners who flog their peasants paternally. He looked with hatred at the factory chimneys when he went to be crowned at Rheims, scattering silver coins on the way and dropping silver horse shoes. You remember how fanatically his eyes blazed in the Cathedral Square at Rheims, when he touched for the king's evil?"

"The conversation seems to be medical," said the lady of the house, Virginie Ancelot, coming in late.

Vitet, the man who had spoken first, Geoffroy, the second man, and Duchâtel, the third, were the chief contributors to *Le Globe* together with Ampère, Rémusat and Sainte-Beuve. All of them belonged to a group of young doctrinaires and were opposed to Villèle's reactionary policy, but at the same time their opposition was so vague and spineless as to permit them to publish in *Le Globe* a defence of the Jesuits' right to the freedom of teaching "out of respect for the rights of all doctrines."

"How unfortunate that the general rehearsal of my husband's play is fixed for to-day!" said Madame Ancelot. "He will be behind the scenes for some time yet. Go on with your conversation, messieurs."

The conversation, however, was not renewed, as the appearance of their hostess prescribed the choice of a lighter subject.

A manservant suddenly announced the arrival of Monsieur César Bombet. Virginie Ancelot opened her eyes in surprise, but before she could question the manservant about the unknown man, Henri Beyle entered the room in very pompous but brisk manner. Before the hostess could utter a word, he began in a loud voice:

"Madame, I arrive too early. I am a very busy man, I get up at five o'clock in the morning, I visit the barracks to see whether my supplies are well made; for, you know, I am the army contractor for stockings and cotton bonnets. Ah! I make the cotton bonnets wonderfully! That is where I shine and I can say that I have succeeded in it since my earliest days, and nothing has diverted me from this honourable and lucrative occupation."

Glancing round, he assumed an insolent and defiant air. Then he said with wistful irony: "Oh! I have heard it said that there are artists and writers who pride themselves on their pictures and books. Bah! what is that in comparison with the glory of booting and capping a whole army so as to prevent colds in the head, and the way I have the bonnets knitted with four-ply cotton!" And bowing in a rather old-fashioned manner, raising his hand with the thumb and forefinger wide apart, he added with the sheer vanity of a tradesman: "And with a tassel of two inches at least . . ."

Everybody was silent. Madame Ancelot was bursting with a frantic desire to laugh and with deep indignation at the fact that forty pairs of eyes of the guests in her famous salon were gazing in astonishment at the door, where on the threshold, as though blocking up the entrance, stood, with intentional gaucherie, a thick-set man in a grey-green frock-coat with a velvet collar, a magnificent soft blue waistcoat with gold buttons and with the face of a butcher framed in a shock of curly hair and black side-whiskers descending from the ears to the Adam's apple, with intelligent and very lively eyes. He slapped the palm of his left hand with his right-hand glove, as though unaware of the staggering effect of his tirade. Sainte-Beuve was the first to break the silence. Holding out his hand to the visitor, he said in a weary, toneless voice: "Well, Beyle, when are your *Promenades dans Rome* going to be published?"

"Where did you get to know that?" asked Beyle, easily passing from his bombastic manner of talking to straightforward conversation.

"I know everything," said Sainte-Beuve.

"Our new visitor seems to have been introduced without my aid," said Virginie Ancelot. "Monsieur Beyle will not refuse to come up to the table."

"With any other man this sally would have been vulgar," said Sainte-Beuve, "but you have so many pseudonyms that your turning up as a contractor has its justification."

One of the young adjutants of Guizot, a student of his courses and a zealous supporter of his political views, went up to Beyle and asked rather nonchalantly: "What is actually your job?"

"I am an investigator of human character."

The young man swallowed his smile and went away with a long face.

"He is an agent of the secret police," he whispered in the ear of Koreff, who went out. "Be on your guard!"

"Hold your tongue, you're simply a maniac," replied Koreff gruffly.

Soon, and especially after the arrival of Mérimée, the conversation became general and animated. Five or six of the more indifferent visitors had still not formed an opinion of Beyle, and a dozen had ceased to think about him, but the majority of the guests were listening with the liveliest interest to this unmasked army contractor, who was no longer talking about stockings and nightcaps, but about the campaign of 1812, as Mérimée had explained to the mistress of the house that he had written *The Capture of the Redoubt* from the account given him by Beyle.

"Heroism," shouted Beyle, "do you know what heroism is? We have become so accustomed to every kind of lie in the army bulletins that we cannot even imagine what a real battle is like. If a soldier is well fed, well clothed and shod, if he has any surplus energy, he thinks above all about returning home, embracing his wife and going to sleep. He loves life. If he is hungry and exhausted, if he is ill, he cannot fight. Where is the heroism in that? When the grape-shot tears up the earth, when the white puffs of smoke run along the bushes, nobody understands anything. In spite of all calculations the men come up against one another with bayonets in their hands not at the times appointed by the generals, and having met, they think only of surviving. The slightest accident determines the result of the skirmish."

"It doesn't look as though you had been to war," said the young man who had asked Beyle about his job.

Nobody paid any attention to him.

Beyle continued: "I saw a whole brigade take to its heels, forsaking the

battlefield merely because five bearded Cossacks appeared from under the bushes. Generals in plumed hats bolted like hares."

"What about yourself?" said somebody.

"I tried to catch up with them," replied Beyle calmly, "but I did not succeed, because I didn't have time to pull a boot on one foot, so I ran with the boot in my hand, not being able to stop and put it on or to throw it away in order to run more quickly. I pricked my foot and was limping. There was only one gendarme who called everybody villains—the generals and the soldiers—and tried to persuade them to stop, not in order to repel the enemy, but merely because he said it was shameful to run away from five bearded Cossacks. At last the gendarme, finding himself alone in the field, himself turned back and towards evening came to the bivouac, to which we had all run. I think his name was Meneval. They spoke of him with enthusiasm. They searched for him in order to give him a decoration, but he hid himself and when at last he was found, he swore terrible oaths that he had not taken any part in the affair and that he was not the man, and it was only when he caught sight of the cross in the officer's hand that he quietened down and came to his senses. It appears he was afraid they were going to shoot him. There's all the heroism for you."

"But we know other cases," they protested.

"I too know other cases," retorted Beyle. "On the third day of the retreat from Moscow I found myself in a company that lagged considerably behind the main detachment. A scout informed us that the way was barred by a Russian detachment. The result was a state of panic. Part of the night was spent complaining and lamenting. Then a big group arrived. That reinforced us, but instead of helping us, they too fell into a state of panic. The commander, whose name I will not mention, turned up and addressed us with the words: 'You scoundrels! You are not fit to hold a gun in your hands. To-morrow they'll kill the lot of you!' and a few stronger expressions, which I cannot, unfortunately, repeat in the presence of ladies. This truly Homeric speech made an impression. An heroic advance began. At dawn, creeping through the bushes, we reached the spot where the bivouac fires of the Russian detachment had been, and came across a starving dog there. That's all."

After supper the guests, who had been shocked by Beyle's sallies, gradually got accustomed to his caustic arguments. The company broke up into groups. Polycarpe Ancelot arrived, surrounded by reviewers and young playwrights of the Théâtre Français.

"How do you like the promising people of the editorial offices of *The Globe*?" Beyle asked Prosper Mérimée.

"I like them to the extent to which they publish my articles. I am prepared to write for any journal regardless of the trend."

"You make a big mistake," said Beyle, "and if what is called a *misunderstanding* has not yet occurred, you may be sure that you will yet have to swallow many a bitter pill. By the by, are the articles in the *Globe* on the theatre yours?"

"They are mine."

"Why did you not sign them?"

"Because I don't attach any importance to them."

"An insincere answer, Clara! I do not sign precisely those things to which I attach importance. Do not imitate my habit of going in for false names and anonymous publications. However, in one case I not only approve it but even welcome it. I have read your magnificent *Chronique de Charles IX* and offer you my congratulations. But bear in mind that it may be the source

of a good deal of trouble for you. Don't reveal your authorship, since you have not put it on the book. Even so it is fairly risky. Charles IX and Charles X, there, preparations for a massacre of the Huguenots, here, preparations for a massacre of the liberals, there, Catholic reaction, here, the death penalty for sacrilege. Take care they don't regard you as a desecrator of the altar on account of your apologia for atheism. Nowadays it is terribly hard to breathe in Paris. I heard only yesterday about the events at Modena. A new Carbonaro conspiracy was discovered and the little sovereign of Modena has acquired a reputation for incredible ferocity. The insurgents were gathered together in the house of a certain *Ciro Menotti*. A battalion of Austrian infantry surrounded them, and the handful of thirty men defended themselves for a whole day and night. It was necessary to call up the artillery and to blast the house with cannon-fire. There you have a country, in which the fiery temper of the people bursts through the top layers of more torpid races like the lava of a volcano."

"Not even a fortress, but a private house in a town . . . with artillery," echoed *Mérimée*. "How unlike our age. It is like an episode from the *Chronicles of Milan of the Sixteenth Century*."

"Yes, but the worst is that Charles-Louis Bonaparte, a restless fellow and a terrible adventurer, took part in the conspiracy. That is why in France they take the conspiracy of *Ciro Menotti* so much to heart. Remember my words, this Charles-Louis Bonaparte, Napoleon's nephew, will turn all France into a house of *Ciro Menotti*."

"Who told you that he is Napoleon's nephew?" said *Sainte-Beuve*, breaking into the conversation. "His mother did not live with her husband. He was at the Hague as King of Holland, and Hortense Bonaparte roamed about Europe at one time with Duroc, with whom she was in love, at another with her chamberlain Flahaut. Who was really responsible for the birth of Charles-Louis Bonaparte it is difficult to say, but it is related that when the King of Holland received a very tender message from his consort telling him that she could no longer endure the long years of wandering about alone without her royal spouse, he slapped himself on the forehead and said: 'By God, she's in the family way: the harlot wants to make the King's mantle her blanket.' He put up a blank wall in place of the doors leading to his wife's half of the palace. The wall however did not hinder Bonaparte from being born. Waving his hands, the King of Holland gave orders for the firing of the customary salute of guns on the birth of an heir to the throne."

"Yes, but the conduct of this boy at Modena and his daring escape all speak in his favour," remarked *Mérimée*.

"They speak in favour of Duroc," said *Beyle*. "A good, strapping general, he is capable of producing an even better boy."

They burst out laughing.

"Nevertheless Metternich is displeased and, apparently, is warning France that this boy may cause a good deal of trouble," said *Beyle*.

"What has Metternich got to do with it?" asked *Mérimée*.

*Rémusat* and two young men came up to the talkers.

"That raven in Vienna is interested in positively everything," *Beyle* replied. "Metternich is the dialectician of reaction. His most original characteristic is the choice of new methods for the defence of the old world. He holds the view that since the time of our Revolution the States have ceased to live an isolated life, and that in all of them common enemies may arise in the person of the

new classes that are raising their heads. Hence the obligation of the States to form an alliance in order to cut off these heads. That is why he believes in 'intervention' in the life of distant and near neighbours. In this he is undoubtedly right. The method of suppressing revolution internationally is the method of international co-operation of the men of the old world in combating revolutions. This is the clearest indication that human societies are changing their face. Where there were formerly individuals there are now thousands that appear on the stage of history, and after a certain time millions will be the driving force of history. Metternich does not like it. He wants to return to the individual."

"Yes, and he regards himself as the most important individual," said Koreff. "If you knew what a high opinion of himself that man has! I myself heard him call himself a torch in the hands of God, lighting the path of mankind to the kingdom of morality and tranquillity. He is the most consummate egotist I have ever known."

"There is an egotism that observes, and an egotism that acts," said Beyle.

"Well," said Koreff, "I don't know what Metternich's egotism is. I only want to say, as a doctor, that egotism contributes to longevity."

"Well, in that case Europe will long have the pleasure of being the scene of Monsieur Metternich's intrigues," said Beyle.

Koreff told a number of anecdotes about *egoism* and *egotism*. Mérimée particularly liked the story of Talleyrand at dinner, when the Cardinal sitting next to him died of heart failure and fell on to his shoulder. Talleyrand called a manservant, calmly and briefly ordered the Cardinal to be removed, and went on eating. Madame Ancelot's sonorous laughter interrupted Koreff's concluding words about longevity.

At three o'clock in the morning Mérimée, Beyle and Koreff returned home. They went on foot, saw Koreff, who had been visiting this time without his wife, to his door, and then the two of them walked on together. For a while they were silent. Then Beyle said: "Listen, Clara, you need not answer my question, but all the same I'm going to put it to you. It seems we shall soon have to congratulate you."

"What for?" Mérimée wondered. "Money? I have in fact earned so much that I am thinking of travelling. I have published *1572, Mateo Falcone* . . ."

"An excellent thing!"

"*La vision de Charles XI* . . ."

"Ah, that's in the July number of the *Revue de Paris*? Listen, Clara, stop juggling with the name of Clara. You jump around Charles X, but don't reach him; you turn him into Charles IX, a rascal who plotted against his people; having jumped too far, in another *nouvelle* you turn him into Charles XI, who had hallucinations and sees his own head being cut off. You must agree that this is fairly transparent and cannot even be called a polite hint; jumping too far yet not jumping far enough—in the end Charles X, now happily reigning, may bestow his ungracious attention upon you. And that won't be at all pleasant."

"What can he do to me?"

"He won't do anything to you, but at a ball at the Duchesse de Broglie's a Guards officer will tread on your foot and jog your elbow so that you spill your champagne on your lady. You will ask him to apologize, but five other officers of the same regiment will stand up for him, and after your first shot,

let us suppose it finds its mark, you will see before your nose on the same day four other pistols, one of which will lay you out anyway."

"Well, I have no great fear of that. I will invite dear, amiable Henri Beyle to be my second. I shall fall ill, and you will fight the duel in my stead. You remember how I envied you once in the Jardin du Luxembourg? I am good for nothing compared with you. Twenty-one shots at the target and not a single miss."

"I wish you the same success in love," said Beyle. "There, it seems, you have fired twenty-one shots without a miss . . ."

"Furthermore," said Mérimée. "Your *Cheverino Redoubt* . . ."

"Be good enough to return me the fee, if it is mine."

"Agreed," said Mérimée. "Further. *Federigo* . . ."

"An excellent legend about a gambler!" exclaimed Beyle. "It has the real Italian atmosphere."

"Well, two months before *Federigo* I read in the same *Revue de Paris* a short story which gave one the atmosphere of Italy in an incomparable manner," said Mérimée.

"So you have read my *Vanina*?" asked Beyle.

"Listen," said Mérimée, "it is my turn to ask you a question, but you are entitled not to answer it if you do not wish to. Is it true that you are a Carbonaro?"

Beyle was silent for a long while. Then he slowly began to speak: "In Milan in 1816 there was a literary circle, which had among its members Byron, Confalonieri, Silvio Pellico, Monti and Count Porro. We used to meet at Ludovico de Breme's. Fate has scattered us all in different directions. It was a time of happiness that will never be repeated, the most enchanting time of my life, a time of great men and tremendous events. It is as remote now as the ruins of the Palatine Hill, where of an evening the grass smells of mint and thyme as in the days of Virgil, but where you will not meet a single Roman toga or hear a single line of the Georgics. I cannot give a straight answer to your question. My former friends are confined in Austrian prisons, Byron is no longer alive, the movement has been stamped out, the whole of Italy bears the impression of silent horror. You will not find there the spontaneous gaiety and frankness of former days. I was closely acquainted with the Carbonari. A man who saved me from Russian captivity at Vilna, a Corsican who returned to Italy, told me a good many things about his life as a Carbonaro. He lost his life in attacking the inquisitor Salvoti; cold-blooded Salvoti pressed a button and my Carbonaro fell through an opening in the floor straight into an underground prison. . . . But how disgusting the pavement is here! You know, I can't get used to the streets of Paris in this part of the town. If you want to get even with me in the matter of questions, you must bear in mind that I have not yet put my question to you. I did not have it in mind to congratulate you on your literary success and fees. Last week I saw you in the carriage of Madame Lacoste. You had an amorous expression, you were smartly dressed, and she placed her hand on your shoulder in such a way that I . . ."

"There is nothing to congratulate me on," said Mérimée. "I don't yet know where I am going to, but I am going to leave France. I am tired of archives, manuscripts, libraries, salons, editorial offices. I want to go to Italy or Spain. I must at last check up to what extent the Spanish comedienne Gazul is true."



"So you are not going to get married to Lacoste?"

"I must go away so that I shan't have to get married," said Mérimée.

"But aren't you making a mistake?" asked Beyle.

"I think I am escaping from her by going away. It would be a mistake to remain."

"Sainte-Beuve once remarked," said Beyle pensively and as though unwillingly, "that if by the time a man is forty his room is not filled with children's voices, it is filled with nightmares."

"I fear in my case it may be filled at the same time with children's voices and the nightmares of conjugal quarrels," replied Mérimée. "I love vicious women, but it is impossible to live with them. Madame Lacoste, it seems, has the inclinations of the Marquis de Sade."

"Why do you slander the poor old man? I saw him in the madhouse at Charenton. He died, when you were still a boy, in 1814. I knew him fairly well. He had something in common with Choderlos de Laclos, the author of *Les Liaisons Dangereuses*. The latter was a full-blooded man, intelligent, almost a genius, far more dangerous than de Sade, because he practised everything within the limits of possibility. As for old de Sade, he merely wrote; it was just the play of the imagination and nothing more. He was eighty when he died. There was a muddy brook at Charenton. The doddering old man would take roses from a tray held by his manservant and, tearing off the petals, would fling them into the dirty water. Sometimes he would take a flower, throw it into the muddy brook and watch the current carry it away."

"Of course I don't compare myself to a flower, but I have no intention of being thrown into the pool of marriage by the hand of Madame Lacoste."

"You talk as though it did not depend on you."

"It is absolutely essential for me to breathe a different air. Here I can't be sure of anything."

Beyle, to his own surprise, became agitated. He had difficulty in breathing. He stopped at the corner to take a rest.

"By the by, who were the young men whom I saw you with at the Cuviers? One was very fat with thick lips, the other was very elegant, with a little fair beard like that of the Palestinian Hebrew, Jesus."

"Those are Victor Hugo's adjutants; the fat one is Théophile Gautier and the fair-haired dandy is Alfred de Musset."

"What! does that Céladon serve the literary glory of Hugo? They have probably arranged things very well. First they will write poetry, and then the old ladies will make them prefects of police, they will make good marriages and be respected citizens of the French provinces."

"And all that, so that at forty their room should not be filled with nightmares," said Mérimée acidly. "Tell me, if you please, why you consider my escape to be a mistake, while you yourself neither marry nor get a place?"

"A place under the Bourbons? Listen, my friend, this is dreadful! However, I cannot say that I have not made any attempts. Chateaubriand considers my memoranda to be the utmost nonsense. I had an opportunity to go to Rome with a certain mission. It was immediately after the death of Pope Leo XII, when I was asked to describe the characters of the Roman Cardinals. I know Rome well. I named as the biggest fool the Cardinal who was the illegitimate son of Charles III of Spain and boasted of belonging to the Bourbons. I was aware that this particular Cardinal had been Charles X's choice and that the King had decided to send Colomb and me to Rome with a million francs

to bribe the Conclave, just as Napoleon had sent me with three million Russian roubles to insure the retreat from Moscow. Nothing came of the new trip. It was decided that it would give offence to Chateaubriand, that royalist fool, and our trip did not take place. Chateaubriand approved the candidature I mentioned, but he did nothing about it. After that my political career was interrupted. I made another attempt, which was entirely in keeping with my present inclinations. You are trying to escape from books and manuscripts, but I, on the contrary, applied for the post of assistant librarian in the manuscript department of the Bibliothèque du Roi. And what do you think? The officials of the library turned down my application in the most decisive manner. They said: 'A man with Beyle's peculiarities cannot be introduced into our milieu, as to admit Beyle to the manuscripts would be like admitting a goat into an orchard; it would be the beginning of disorder in the library.' As you see, that attempt likewise failed. And meanwhile I too have grown tired of Paris, which has no prospects. I am interested in the living France, if there is such a thing. Well, here we are. Good night." And before Mérimée could reply, Beyle went upstairs. The lights were burning bright at Madame Pasta's. Some fifteen persons were seated at a card table. Red wine stood on a small table by the window. The cold, grey light of dawn was creeping into the room. Corner, quite drunk, came up and leaned his elbow on Beyle's shoulder. His enormous dark eyes stared at Beyle vacantly. Madame Pasta was talking to her mother in a corner; her husband was sitting at the card table. Corner's lips moved, he tried to say something but failed. Beyle paid no attention to him, trying only to keep him from pressing his elbow too much on his shoulder.

At last Corner said: "You've been knocking about here for five years. When I told Métilde Viscontini about it, she blamed you very much and said: 'So he lied to me.'"

With a resolute movement Beyle shook himself free from Corner, who collapsed heavily on to a divan. Beyle took himself off to his own room and wrote a letter to Colomb:

Dear Cousin, the sad event is anyway inevitable, and if I bring it about sooner, it is because it is impossible to act otherwise. On the writing-table, in the green portfolio, you will find my will. Farewell!      Henri Beyle.

Then he pulled out a case of pistols, took out a pistol, examined it, cocked the trigger and laid the pistol on the table. His hand traced mechanically on the paper with its habitual flourish the design of a pistol. Then all of a sudden he went up to the wall with firm, resolute steps, unbuttoned his shirt and pointed the muzzle. Without closing his eyes or feeling his heart beat he pulled the tight trigger with angry determination. There was a dry grating sound; but that was all. Before his eyes stood two lamps, two writing-tables, two beds floated about the room, his head was in a whirl, but it only lasted a moment. "We will do without dramatic gestures," he thought, as he examined the pistol. "The powder is dry, the flint is in order, but the steel is worn, there was no spark from the stroke. Perhaps it is a good thing?" He carefully wrapped the pistol up, placed it in the case, put the case back into its former place and, heaving a sigh as after a serious illness, began to undress. He slept like a log, as in the days gone by at the bivouacs after the difficult cavalry crossings. In the morning only the letter to Colomb reminded him of what might have happened in the night. He went to call the floor waiter, as there was no water to wash with. On his return, he found Colomb reading the letter with great

attention. Beyle rushed towards his cousin. Colomb raised his eyes, looked at him sternly and pushing him away with his left hand, hid the letter behind his back with his right.

"That stupid note reached its address all the same," he said. "I don't ask you for any explanations."

"They are not necessary. I have no intention of giving them to you," said Beyle.

"Good, but all the same for what date is this sad event intended?" asked Colomb. "You know, you are the last person I expected such a horror from."

Colomb paced up and down the room. His teeth were chattering, his hands were clutched convulsively, his head shook.

"Just think, if I had been too late . . ."

"Yes, you are already too late," said Beyle.

Colomb looked at him, failing to understand.

"Tell me, what must be done so that there may be no repetition of this?"

"There won't be any repetition."

"How can you be sure? If you could only find a place in life. You are a mathematician. Take up the engineering business."

"I am nothing more than an observer. I have no intention of being a participant and slave of actual life. It is enough that I am able to describe it."

Colomb halted beside a small writing-table with books and manuscripts. His eyes roamed mechanically over the table without reading anything. Suddenly a huge pile of papers with the inscription *Julien* in large letters drew his attention.

"What's that?" he asked.

"It is a contemporary chronicle," replied Beyle. "I don't know how it will turn out."

"Anyway you should think about what can be done to find you a permanent occupation. How big is your pension from the War Ministry?"

"One thousand five hundred francs."

"And your literary earnings?"

"They are casual," replied Beyle. "But I don't want to make them regular and, I repeat, I have no intention of serving the Bourbons."

"Well, you should get married to Comtesse Curial. Apparently your affair has gone pretty far. I have read *Armance*; the description of the trips to Andilly had given everybody to understand that it was you who were living at Madame Curial's."

"I should be no good at family life. Moreover, Menta has had lovers enough to be insured against a new one."

"Well, for that matter, the number of your mistresses is not exactly infinitesimal. I can't understand how you can have the heart to reproach a woman and continue to visit her."

"I don't see her any more."

"Then there is no way out?"

"I beg you to stop talking about me. Tell me, if you please, what is Crozet doing and when is it possible to find him at home? I am in his debt."

"He is coming back in a week's time. But remember that Crozet has the same opinion of you as the others. He thinks that you ought to take a post and not loaf about."

"I am working beyond my strength. What I am doing is extremely serious and necessary."

"Take care that all these serious and necessary occupations do not become for you the summer song of the grasshopper. You will want employment, when all the best posts have been taken by men of your generation. Life will squeeze you out. That is incomparably worse than the idea of getting married at seventy."

"I am prepared to give serious consideration to what you say, but I must tell you that I have never once regretted that I did not accept Beugnot's proposal in 1815 that I should become the chief of supply for Paris. I know the mechanism of authority well enough. I know myself well. By this year I should have been obliged to send people to forced labour for stealing or go to prison because I connived at bribery."

"But it is not entirely a matter of stealing and bribery."

"The rest is a matter of bribing the electors and gambling on the Stock Exchange, of clerical hypocrisy and military careerism. I know how the selection of the commanding personnel of the army is now organized. They select Frenchmen sufficiently dull-witted and not afraid to fire at a crowd of unarmed citizens in the squares. Is this the army with which I was at Mincio and at Castel Franco? Was it this army that crossed the St. Gothard? What is happening at present? The nobles' patent has clashed with the book-keepers' ledger. Is there any place for the rest of France? What have we to do in this squabble of the nobles with the financial oligarchy?"

"The financial oligarchy is organizing the economy of the country."

"The financial oligarchy is organizing its own profit, and the nobles envy its sleight of the hand. That is all."

The conversation went on for a long time.

## CHAPTER THIRTY-EIGHT

THE NOVEL ENTITLED "JULIEN" CAME INTO BEING IN THE DAYS WHEN ALL THE newspapers were full of the trial of the joiner Lafargue. Beyle's head was full of the last proof sheet of *Promenades dans Rome*. After *Vanina* it was a splendid hymn of praise to Italian energy and spontaneity. The only country in the world that had retained the capacity to love something, to achieve something, to give up life itself for the sake of its aspirations, and to do so passionately and gladly, was Italy. It was necessary to show the miserable empty-headed Frenchmen sitting at desks and in Ministerial armchairs that they had killed the vitality of their country, that they had ceased to count since 1814, that the age of great deeds was past and that humdrum days of petty worries had come.

And suddenly there was this trial of the joiner Lafargue.

A youth in a blue blouse, his eyebrows like arrows, his blue eyes full of unquenchable fire, pale and thin, rose from the prisoners' bench behind the bars. An escort with naked sabres stood beside him. Lafargue spoke calmly, in a quiet voice. Where did this simple workman of the Paris suburbs come from? What did he want to say in his last speech, eight hours after which his head would be severed by the blade of the guillotine? The sentence had already been pronounced. What was there he could talk about?

He no longer talked, but shouted harshly and contemptuously: "I could not catch up with the cowardly bourgeois, who bought my wife for money, but I had to do that which would make it impossible for him to buy her a second time. Let him know that if we sell our labour, we do not sell our wives. He won't be able to buy anything now."

On returning from the trial, Beyle hurriedly jotted down his impressions in the form of a conviction that there was a real, living France which neither Ministers, bourgeoisie, nobles or French writers knew anything about. This was the France of the new, energetic generation. He frankly named the social class that would provide strong characters: to this class belonged young Lafargue.

"It is absolutely impossible to print it," said the chief compositor. "You must understand that it will upset the whole make-up of your *Promenades dans Rome*."

"Not the whole, only the second volume," said Beyle.

"Your supplement has forty pages of text and, frankly speaking, these pages spoil *Promenades dans Rome*. What has the joiner Lafargue to do with Rome? However, if you insist, I can suggest setting it up in brevier—then it will only make twenty pages."

"Set it up," said Beyle. "You must co-operate with me. You yourself are a worker."

"A worker! To-morrow I may find myself in the street. A new improvement in the machinery and half the workers become unnecessary. The owner of the printing works welcomes every improvement in the machinery so that he won't have to pay the worker. You saw what was happening at the gates of the printing works? They are starving compositors, folders, and stitchers. They have been standing outside the gates since the morning. They wait for the owner and call out to him that they are willing to work for a lower wage than we are getting."

"What do you think of doing?" asked Beyle.

"I myself had thought of suggesting that my wages should be lowered. Then perhaps I might be kept on. But I am afraid of my comrades. It will work out to their disadvantage, but there is no possibility of coming to an agreement with them, firstly, because they listen to everything and report it to the police; secondly, they will find ways of getting rid of me by accusing me of agitating for a strike. We are in a very bad way."

"Where were you born?"

"I was born in Paris. As a boy I worked at Didot's."

"I thought you were from the country and that you could return there."

"Good Lord! Even if I were from the country, it is impossible to go there now. The new landowners are no better than the old nobles. The peasants are ruined the same as we are."

"Well, when do you think the book will be out?"

"Have a talk with the manager. We'll have it set up by this evening. To-morrow we'll let you have the galleys."

Next morning, waking up early, Beyle took up a volume of the *Code Civil* and perused the clauses on adoption and the equality of citizens. For many years now the *Code Civil* had helped him in his search for the right words, simple, clear and laconic forms of speech. He was writing a big novel. He cherished the book and worked on it during the rest of the day.

In February 1828 the *Gazette des Tribunaux* published the sentence of death on Antoine Berthet, a blacksmith's son. At 11 o'clock on 23rd February of the same year Antoine Berthet was beheaded in the Place de la Garnison at Grenoble before the eyes of a huge crowd of weeping women and the windows of the houses filled with bourgeois in *déshabille*. Not satisfied with the accounts of the trial in the six numbers of the *Gazette des Tribunaux*, Beyle

went to the notary Duffléard, got the original of the case from him, had it copied and began to work on it. The blacksmith's son from the town of Brangues, a good-looking young man, ran away from his family in order to study and make his way in the world. He managed with difficulty to enter a seminary. Among the hungry envious seminarists he felt ill at ease. He was more capable than his comrades and possessed a prodigious memory, but his curiosity in all spheres assumed proportions that were not permissible for the pupil of an institution training ministers of religion. This was the first ground for conflict. Berthet was the best scholar in the place, and when the mayor of the town of Brangues asked for a tutor for his children, the head of the seminary could not but recommend him, knowing that all the others might compromise the seminary in the eyes of the prominent bourgeois. So the seminarist Berthet became a tutor in the house of the Mayor Michoud. Next there was a repetition of the story of Rousseau and Madame Verdeline. A handsome tutor "from the people," talented, but without any hope of advancement in the world, and a young lady of twenty-eight, with a busy husband and bored. The daily business meetings and conversations about the children soon gave place to nocturnal conversations on another subject. The subjects of these conversations became known to the mayor. The seminarist was turned out of the house. Madame Michoud decided to do something desperate: she met him outside the town and swore not to forget him. The head of the seminary gave Berthet a recommendation to a wealthy nobleman, Monsieur de Cordon, seeing him off with the words: "You are young, handsome and full of life. You are going to Paris. You have brilliant capacities, consequently . . . they won't hate you." By now Berthet had lost his spontaneity and become cautious in every movement, calculating in the choice of every word, ruthless in his feeling of contempt for the people around him. His great store of youthful energy was without an outlet. The duties entrusted to him were as easy as they were repulsive. This alien, cold, embittered man, so unlike the noble puppets sitting in the de Cordon salon, capable at best of parting bravely with their life in a duel, attracted the attention of de Cordon's daughter. This attention passed into curiosity, and the curiosity turned into an even stronger feeling. The second romance began. Berthet was again deprived of his post. He went away and entered the service of a notary at Morestel. There he learnt that the woman who swore to be faithful to him had found a substitute. The new young man, tutor and lover at the same time, had taken his place in the house. Berthet went to Brangues. In the church on Sunday, 22nd July, he first fired a pistol shot at Madame Michoud while she was praying, and then attempted unsuccessfully to end his own life. He began with the seminary and ended with the guillotine. Indeed, what was there for young men with a vast store of energy to do, young men who had no estates to inherit, did not belong to the old nobility and at the same time could not build factories or organize other means of profit, which perhaps they did not even wish to do? How was the conflict of youthful energy and misfortune to be solved?

Trials such as those of Lafargue and Berthet were becoming a regular occurrence in France. Energy, suitable for large scale purposeful activity, existed in a class that was bound hand and foot. Were the scribblers, who filled the columns of the newspapers with political falsehoods, aware of this? Life was becoming a lottery. The "capable men," who had not yet finished their struggle for power with the "men of highest origin," were jostling one another in competition. In Paris the race for profits and the race for careers had begun.

The most hopeful career for a young man of the middle class was the priest's cassock. The ruined nobleman, the younger son of a landowner's family, must likewise become a monk in order to receive an episcopal appointment commensurate with his title, while the eldest son, by virtue of the restoration of the right of primogeniture, got the title, the estates and the money. Competition, which had become a gamble in a lottery, might put the stakes on the red and the black. Red was the colour of the red flags of 1793, black—the dress of the Catholic priesthood. The third colour—the white colour of the Bourbon flag—lay like a lifeless streak between the red and the black.

"Well then, we'll cross out the title *Julien* and write *Le Rouge et le Noir*."

After *Armance* this novel was written with extraordinary ease and quickness. Everything fitted into its place. The only difficulty was the language. Beyle had achieved perfect clarity of language in his short stories and articles. But here he was unable to accomplish this. What could be worse than the antiquated language of the French Academy, a language which did not reflect the living speech of present-day France or the lively talk of the Parisians on all kinds of subjects beyond the reach of the academic ear. The laws that governed the mind of contemporary France were drawn up by the man who brought the present France into being. The *Code Napoléon* was the best source for the right word, a source that provided all the necessary ideas for a novel. A week later Crozet, Colomb, Mérimée, Mareste, Koreff, Delécluze and ten or twelve other men occupied a whole room in the restaurant "Aux Frères Provençaux" near Meudon. The organizer of the supper was Crozet. They talked in loud voices, ate with appetite, talked and laughed all at once. From time to time somebody's voice captured the general attention. At last Beyle arrived. Crozet announced in a loud voice that the supper had been arranged in honour of a new-born child. All exchanged glances. Beyle also looked surprised and waited for an explanation.

"An illegitimate son has been born to Beyle!"

"I thought you were going to say something new," said Beyle, as he took his seat at the table with a disappointed look. "It happens so often that I no longer keep count."

"But I do," said Crozet. "No, joking apart, messieurs, there is something on which he may be congratulated."

He produced from under the table the two volumes of *Promenades dans Rome*.

"Here is an excellent book, the best book I have ever read."

Koreff with a lazy gesture demanded to see it. Impatiently, he leaned across the table and upset a glass of wine. Crozet pulled the book away.

"It really is a beautiful book!" shouted Delécluze. "Nobody has ever described Rome like this before whether as a whole or in parts. It is an excellent guide for the tourist, the adventurer and the smuggler. In the past the travelling noble signore was given every possible information about holy places, monasteries, miracles performed by images, and the nobility and wealth of princes, but we have never read about how to go from Paris to Rome without a passport, how to rate the official conscience of the custom-house inspector, or about the infallible method of duping police spies and gendarmes."

"Information of that kind is just what I need, as the police won't let me into Spain," said Mérimée.

"Well then, stay at home. What does it matter if you don't go there," said Mareste gruffly.

"I'm not going to stay at home, and as a book has come out that reveals

all the secrets of Rome, I shall go to Italy," said Mérimée, "and stay with your Giacinta," he added, turning to Beyle. "You praised her so much in *Promenades dans Rome* that I want to inspect this amiable creature, who let you have a room for two francs. What does she take for the rest?"

"That depends on the appearance of the buyer," said Beyle.

"In that case we are all doomed either to have no success or to pay a high price."

"But you should take 'all the rest' with you from Paris," remarked Koreff.

"'All the rest' causes a good deal of bother on the way, takes up a lot of room and requires a passport, so it is better to be overcharged in Rome."

"Good. Anyway let's drink to Beyle's health," said Delécluze.

They drank his health a good many times. Crozet became quite tipsy. He stared at Beyle with his huge dazed eyes and growled something in reply, while Beyle poked into his pocket a wad of six thousand francs saying: "You see, I've written the book anyway. Here's your money back, dear friend."

Crozet insisted on filling his glass with brandy. Towards dawn Beyle went upstairs with Mérimée without remembering if he had said good-bye to anybody. When he was undressed, Mérimée wished him good night and heard the key turn in the lock as he went away. In the morning purple rings floated before Beyle's eyes. His head ached, he could hardly stand on his feet. Looking in the mirror he noticed that his hair had grown thin. He poured a jug of cold water over his head, took a towel, and was surprised to see his six thousand francs of yesterday lying beside his frock-coat on the floor.

"Didn't I return them?" he wondered as he picked up the money. "Or has that drunken rascal Crozet taken it into his head to play a joke on me? Does he imagine that I will accept his charity?"

He dressed and went out into the air. A quarter of an hour later he was able to breathe freely and his head became clearer.

Crozet had gone away, leaving a letter addressed to "Monsieur Beyle":

I knew you would come, dear Henri. Do not think to offend me, allow me to share my winnings with you. When I gave you the money for the journey, I did not foresee that it would have such splendid results. The book is really remarkable, and I know that the repeated editions will provide for you for several years. It is in every respect new. Only in your place I would not have drawn such sharp distinctions between the different classes of Roman society. Italy is not like England, in which there are as many mutually exclusive truths as there are classes which fear and hate one another. I beg you not to trouble about returning the money, which is no more mine than a chance find.

"Crozet appears to have outwitted me," thought Beyle. "Can one object to friendship? But let him find other ways of expressing it. In any case the wad of bank-notes is very timely at present. Of course the book will sell, it is needed, it is interesting, it is entertaining. No matter if it has a few rough parts and fictions. The objection that the travellers in the mail-coach are imaginary is of no account. Four men with a lively intelligence and three beautiful women do not always happen to be fellow travellers on journeys along the coaching roads. No doubt there are some stolen things in the books: the encounter with Melchiorre Gioie, alas!—it is from a letter of Paul-Louis Courier on Calabria—'the land of orange groves, olive groves, hedges of lemon trees.' Of course the day when the fire broke out in the basilica of St. Paul



on 16th July, 1823, I was in Paris, but what an eye-witness's account ! I myself am ready to believe my own testimony. Of course, the first time I was in Rome was in 1811. The republican enthusiasm which swept Rome in 1802 was known to me only from hearsay. But the two spies who followed on my heels on the day of my departure and kissed my hand because I treated them to some wine when I passed the barrier—that was something that really happened. I could not write that all this happened to me a few months ago ! That scoffer Mérimée caught me out because I attributed to St. Augustine the words of Tertullian: '*Credo, quia absurdum.*' It was easy to catch me out in that, but he did worse in drawing attention to my remarks about the Pope. He declared that if the Pope was a clever man, which did sometimes happen, he ought, of course, to put the *Promenades dans Rome* on the Index, and then the French Catholics would have to renounce the pleasure of buying the book openly. Mérimée asked me point-blank: 'So you seriously maintain that after Milan you saw Byron again in Venice?' When I asked him the reason for his doubts, he replied: 'The conversation is too literary. Your stories of Milan give a different impression.' A perspicacious youth !"

On returning home, he found a note: "Come, dear tutor, on Thursday after nine o'clock in the evening. I want you to meet Victor Hugo. Sainte-Beuve and Delécluze will be there. Balzac has promised to come for a minute."

At the appointed hour Beyle turned up at Mérimée's. A handsome young man of twenty-five held out his hand to him—it was Victor Hugo. In his left hand he held a thick bound copy-book; when Beyle entered the room, he was reading a passage out of it. A short fat man with lively eyes and the corners of his mouth turned up like a boar was pacing up and down the room. He conchalantly gave Beyle his hand in passing, when Mérimée coldly mentioned the name of his friend to him. He did not mention his own name, and Mérimée evidently did not think it necessary to introduce him. Balzac for some reason or other did not like to pronounce his own name.

"Yes, it is fine, but too verbose. One should not compel the public to keep its ears open. It seems to me that you need to shorten the monologues of *Hernani*."

Mérimée went up to Beyle.

"Imagine, Hugo came two hours earlier and has been reading his play the whole time."

"I am very grateful to you for having made it possible for me to be late. Admit that you did it on purpose," replied Beyle. "How would you have liked it as host if I had fallen asleep during the reading?"

"You would not have fallen asleep. The play is excellent. The whole theatre will be delighted with it."

Beyle shrugged his shoulders and went over to Balzac.

"I have not written a single line of verse," Balzac was shouting. "I don't see any necessity for it!"

"Every cobbler to his last," said Hugo. "And you, Monsieur Beyle? I have been told that you have made some experiments in verse."

"Yes, I was once in love with an actress and I composed some comedies in verse to her order. It was comedy in all respects."

"And do you share Monsieur de Balzac's opinion of verse?"

"I am beholden to no one for my views," replied Beyle, "but I consider that verse in the majority of cases serves to cover up paucity of ideas. A valuable idea can only be expressed in prose. In verse the idea has to be at

the service of the rhythm. You have to reject the more expressive word if it has two syllables too many, and put in another, which gives a nuance that lowers the quality of the idea. As you see, I express myself rather clumsily, but I regard verse as a cloak for stupidity," said Beyle with sudden harshness.

Hugo seemed not to notice this harshness. He replied calmly: "Yes, but language is not such a simple instrument. At certain stages of development man attains to ideal perfection. Then prose itself becomes rhythmical, and those conditions which would seem to you to be artificial become the natural conditions of human speech. Rhythm! It would seem that nothing could more hamper the flow of thought or alter the content of the ideas to be expressed than hunting for the right rhythm. But there comes a time when the creative urge of the artist makes the idea and the form absolutely identical. The word with the necessary rhythm comes and provides the necessary and ideal solution to the problem. This coincidence we poets call inspiration."

"Can one speak seriously of inspiration? A work written under inspiration is the song of an alcoholic. In a work of that kind there can be neither reason nor sense. To instance a man of talent who has found the required rhythm is the same as to instance a gambler who has won high stakes. Neither the one nor the other has the signs of solid work. It is not the result of mental work. Literature is work and not inspiration. A writer must be guided by what logic prescribes!" concluded Beyle, as usual pronouncing separately the syllables of his favourite word.

"In that case, what is the difference between science and literature?" asked Hugo.

"None whatever," replied Beyle. "Literature is a form of accurate description and analysis, almost the same as 'the language of numbers.' I cannot have confidence in the captain of a steamship who is in a state of drunkenness. I cannot have confidence in a writer who lacks sobriety."

"In comparing the inspiration of a poet to the drunkenness of an alcoholic, you completely forget about the poet's ideals."

"The very word 'ideal' makes me suspicious. Whenever I hear it, I always tap myself on the pocket to see whether anything is missing. Why should you, a serious writer, hide behind such tawdry notions? What have ideals to do with it? You may even be disposed to appraise politics as a trade based on aspiration towards an ideal."

"That is precisely what I consider politics to be," said Hugo. "I believe in God and love the King."

Beyle bowed ironically. "In the course of a year," he said, "there have been sixteen executions in the Place de Grève by way of educating the population of the town. On 23rd May last year the Holy Father ordered seven revolutionaries to be hanged in the square at Ravenna. Their corpses were left hanging for two days. In Paris we put people to death in the name of the King—in Romagna—in the name of God! There's your ideal, Monsieur Hugo."

"Yes, execution is a horrible thing! I saw the execution of Louvel, who assassinated the Duc de Berry. And in spite of all the justice of that retribution I could hardly bear the sight of the execution."

"What 'just retribution' made one execute the joiner Lafargue and the blacksmith's son Berthet? Neither of them had committed any crime, but the Government which has put hundreds of thousands of young Frenchmen in the way of crime and thieving points out that the country has gone astray. What ideals are there in that!" said Beyle, shrugging his shoulders.

"But these young men, at least the two you mentioned, wanted to go beyond the bounds of their class," objected Hugo. "That never happens with impunity."

"Then where is the 'Declaration of Rights'? What cul-de-sac have you got into? It is not even a question of classes, but of the fact that at the time when great and bloody events were taking place in Europe there was born an unfortunate tribe of premature, nerve-wrecked boys, who are unable to shoulder the painful heritage of the age. What will you do with these young men, sickly, weak, half-baked, already worn-out in their mothers' wombs? What are they good for? You talk about the ideals of goodness and truth? Monsieur Hugo, for these ideals energy and a will that has a great store of strength at its disposal are necessary, and where will you find them, if you don't want to remain within the bounds of pretty phrases? What will these young men do, whom nobody needs, and what will those occasional young men do, who are endowed with a sufficient store of will and energy, and who do not belong to the nobility on the one hand, and on the other hand do not want to spend their energy on organizing their own profit? There is only one class capable of surviving at present, and that of course is the bourgeoisie, with its hard-hearted drive to turn time into money."

Balzac, who had listened with interest to this tirade, interrupted Beyle :

"It is there that all the possibilities begin. As soon as time has become money, money gives a man the possibility of doing everything. He is the real ruler of the universe, he lays down roads, builds cities, plants forests, invents machines, feeds the hungry and gives wages to a whole region. Why do you take the bourgeois down from his pedestal? I will tell you about the bourgeois. He came from the country; he walked barefooted in the dust of Paris, carrying his stick, bundle and wooden shoes on his back. He was young and handsome, he had not a penny to his name, he had nothing to buy a loaf with. At the market he asked where he could get a night's lodging. A young woman pointed out to him her own shop of perfumes, good soap and powder. In the morning he becomes a shop assistant; by the evening he becomes a husband; a year later he is a proprietor and parfumeur, the first parfumeur in Paris. His shop-sign bears the words: 'Purveyor to the royal court.' . . . You would not recognize this man, so great has been the change in him. He goes in for big business, he buys raw material in India, he leases plantations and flower gardens at Nice, the best chemists work in his factory, his perfumes are the pride of the young people of the Court. But he has not become stuck up, he is religious, he is modest, he honours the King. He endured in silence the miseries of our cursed revolution, and now he is in power again. Together with old Caesar, the great military commander who conquered Gaul, he is now peacefully conquering markets and re-constructing the life of the new Gaul. He is the builder of a new world, he is the creator of a new France, he is the same Caesar, but Caesar Birotteau. Look at him: in the family circle, surrounded by respectful children, in the morning, in a soft dressing-gown, he sits at a little table and with a goose quill moves a bead on the abacus. Before him sits a young man, an officer from the Pavillon de Marsan, ready to sign a promissory note for a large sum of money. But do you suppose this Caesar Birotteau is a usurer who fleeces the aristocracy? No, he is a bourgeois, ready to help a nobleman in the business of supporting the throne."

"Who is this you're talking about?" asked Hugo. "I've never heard of him."

"Of course you haven't, because he doesn't yet exist, but he will soon be

born. In a short while you will see his name in the windows of the book-shops."

"No, you are more likely to see the name of Julien," said Beyle, "the name of the carpenter's son, who refused the career of a parfumeur. You will see the bourgeois and the aristocrat, neither powdered nor scented. I want to show you what the provincial houses and Paris salons close to the Court smell of, before your fortunate Caesar has perfumed them and a less fortunate poet has embellished them."

This last was aimed at Hugo. The discreet poet was sitting in an arm-chair opposite, looking dignified. Beyle tried in vain to mask with an ugly, forced smile the hostility that appeared in his face.

There was an awkward silence. Looking at all his guests calmly and imperturbably, the host did nothing to break the ice that had formed.

## CHAPTER THIRTY-NINE

VICTOR HUGO WAS ABOUT TO LEAVE.

"You go to bed early, do you not?" asked Anna Mérimée, addressing the poet.

"The child wakes me up," said Hugo, "and besides work always calls me in the morning. In the morning hours I like to feel new ideas; my brain is refreshed and invigorated."

"I like to work at night," said Balzac. "Towards evening the brain is enriched with solid, well-formed ideas. Everything is in motion, a delightful, furious paroxysm of work begins. The absence of visual impressions permits all the monstrous images born during the day to grow in the twilight. By night they become enormous, strong, independent beings. If towards morning they have not managed to grow up, I put them into the incubator like chicks that are not fully hatched. I draw the blinds and in spite of the impudent Paris dawn I make dark night. The lamp heats my big coffee-pot. Twenty-four candles in Regency chandeliers light my table. The blinds are lowered, the windows are shut tight, the doors are closed, and I assure you that my work on the homunculus ends far more successfully than that of Wagner, notwithstanding that the Dominican cassock and cowl smack of the Middle Ages."

"I like to work in the day-time," said Beyle. "I like to work in the morning. I like complete clarity around me. Is it possible to see the world as it is through the soot of your chandeliers?"

"Well, in that case you must prefer a different soot," said Balzac. "You refuse to see even in daylight the true hero of our times. This hero is the bank-note. It upsets the spirit of your heroes, it creeps in everywhere, it dictates its will, it is soulless, cold, rustling and dead. It seizes your girls by the throat, snatches away their wreath of orange blossom and flings them with a sailor at midnight on to a bench in the Boulevard des Italiens and then on to the table of a venereal disease doctor at the Salpêtrière. It builds and destroys, it constructs bridges that unite shores, and severs threads that bind hearts. It drains marshes and causes oceans of tears to flow, it turns villages into wastes and makes strong young men wither away, and at the same time it can, by coming into a family at the right time, bring the bloom of health to the cheeks of an ailing child."

"So far we have seen only the destructive power of your hero," said Beyle. "The workers complain that every new improvement of machinery threatens

them with poverty. Labour does not enrich the man who labours. Your hero prefers to choose as his abode the pockets of the rogue, but bear in mind that what delights you as a novelty in Paris has long been a commonplace in New York. The whole question is that a man should choose his character himself. Remember what Virgil said: *Trahit sua quemque voluptas*. You are well aware of the power of money. I am well aware of it. You write books, I write them, and if we had millions of francs we would not be unfaithful to ourselves. I am horrified by the Frenchmen, who were born . . ."

He glanced at Mérimée, who was beginning to frown, smiled, changed a date in his mind and continued: ". . . after 1810."

The frown on Mérimée's brow disappeared. He was born in 1803.

"They horrify me with their lack of understanding," Beyle went on, "their eagerness to be like everybody else. Everything that is not 'like everybody else' fills them, if not with an inner aversion, then with anxiety about their careers. Their inclinations are not determined by the conscientious cultivation of their character, but merely by the hasty acquisition of generally accepted rules. They must recommend themselves by going to confession at the right time, attending church, and having a precise knowledge of the generally accepted rules. They must not read too many books. Even the buying of newspapers must be done cautiously; the choice of comrades, who are neither rich nor have resounding names, is not a recommendation for a young man. One must observe that this is not a rule of class, but a custom of caste; its violation is punished sternly and ruthlessly. Attention is paid chiefly to a man's submission to the generally accepted rules, which are remarkable for their absurdity and are opposed to common sense."

"You too have suffered from that?" asked Balzac.

"I have not suffered from it, but I like the pleasant society of Italy—the only one in the world that does not regard poverty as a crime and pays more attention to intelligence and talent than to titles or income. It would be interesting to place our young men in conditions of complete prosperity and to see how they would dispose of it. Well, convert the time allotted to a man to live, if not into a book of yours or mine, which one can read or not according to whether one finds it entertaining or dull, but into the favourite book of the new aristocracy, the banker's cheque book. Do it so that the young man who gets such a book can cut out the coupons. See what they will spend this life on, what they will convert their energy into, what they will exchange it for."

Balzac struck his forehead with the palm of his hand.

"That's a happy idea! That's interesting! That's a brilliant thought! I will call this book, the cheque book, '*la peau de chagrin*.' I will strew it with epigraphs as old as the world, the sayings of Solomon, the promises of payment for human happiness. Let it be the promissory note of fate, and let the owner of this piece of wild asses' skin know that every desire diminishes the size of it, and that the day when it becomes as big as a pin's head he will have nothing left except the desire to breathe as little as possible."

"And until then?" asked Beyle.

"Until then—let us go to sleep. Monsieur Hugo is already asleep, it seems."

On the way out, Beyle suddenly began telling Victor Hugo about his life.

"You know that I was born at la Nouvelle, a little village near Narbonne on the coast. My father was a fisherman and one of the very poorest. Regularly in the summer, when our little boats returned from fishing and were no more than a hundred paces from the shore, my father would take off my coat and

throw me into the sea. While he was busy with the rigging, I had to swim ashore and run home to warn my mother, so that she would have time to prepare a hot dinner. In this way I learned to swim like a fish. Towards the end of the Empire conscription snatched me from my family. I returned to la Nouvelle in 1816. . . ."

Hugo looked at Beyle with the utmost seriousness and amazement without blinking an eyelid. His companions were smiling.

"I became a rich man after the death of my uncle in British India. It was my salvation, for not finding any of my relations alive, I should have been in a very sad plight in Paris. The day I learnt about my wealth, I was taking a walk along the bank of the Seine near the Pont d'Iéna. A strong wind was blowing from the direction of the Champ de Mars. The Seine was rough like the sea. On the river I saw a boat loaded with sand trying in vain to put in at the quai des Bons-Hommes. All of a sudden it capsized. The boatman shouted for help. I walked along the bank and thought: 'I am forty-seven. Last year I had rheumatism. I lay in a military hospital, and not a single dog gave me a thought. Is it worth while jumping into the water to save that man? The fellow should learn to swim before becoming a bargee.' The man continued to shout. I calmly walked off along the bank. The shouts continued. I doubled my pace. 'The devil take him!' I thought. 'If I go away, that cry will ring in my ears all through my life. But if I jump into the water and pull that fellow out who will visit me afterwards when I am laid up with rheumatism, staring at the ceiling over my bed for six weeks? No, to hell with him! One must know how to swim when one becomes a bargee.' I walked quickly in the direction of l'École Militaire. Suddenly a voice said to me: 'Lieutenant Louaut, you are a coward!'"

"But what has Lieutenant Louaut got to do with it?" asked Balzac. "It happened to you, did it not?"

"It is all the same," replied Beyle.

"Well, and what did Lieutenant Louaut do?" asked Hugo with a yawn.

"Lieutenant Louaut said to himself: 'Ah! this is serious.' He ran towards the river, undressed in a moment, jumped into the water and pulled the drowning man out by his collar. On the bank I railed at myself for this so-called heroism. After being rubbed all over with eau-de-vie and flannel, but still shivering from the cold, I thought of the rheumatic pains that awaited me and I asked myself: 'In what does the essence of my conduct consist?' Messieurs, of course it merely consists in my having been afraid of my own contempt. That is all. The new generation of men is not afraid of baseness. They will spit in their own faces with a light heart and cover up the fact with fine phrases and sophisms. The difference is nothing to do with the fact that one man jumps into the water in order to prove himself a hero, another to save a rich man and get a reward, or a third because he is prompted by the vulgarities of your evangelistic philosophy which promises a cosy place in paradise for this good deed. The difference consists in the fact that a man obeys not outer stimuli but an inner voluntary yearning to preserve the integrity of his own character. *Au revoir, messieurs!*"

So saying, Beyle leapt on to the foot-board of a passing cab and drove off.

"I seem to have read about the incident of Lieutenant Louaut in the pages of *Le Constitutionnel*," said Hugo. "There are two impressions which I cannot reconcile at all: the man who wrote *Racine et Shakespeare* and gave us a very fine picture of the Romantic theatre which we serve, suddenly turns out to be such a callous materialist, an atheist, a man with a heart of stone."

"Add to that: a man with a brilliant mind and an amazing talent for life," said Balzac.

"What about driving to Saint-Denis?" Beyle asked the cabman.

"It's dark, monsieur, and we'll be going through a rough district. It is dangerous to go so far."

"That means that you want me to pay more?"

"No, monsieur, the gas lamps don't go beyond the turning, and last night they killed a cabman on the road to Montmorency, took his two-wheeled *coucou* and drove off with it to nobody knows where. You had better wait for the omnibus and at seven o'clock in the morning you'll be at the Abbey."

"Well, you'll arrive at six o'clock in the morning, what is the difference!" said Beyle. "I'll pay you well. You have a four-wheeled cab and not a *coucou*. You have a pair of horses, and I have a pistol," said Beyle, in order to put the cabman at ease.

The cabman consented.

"Since I've been married, I've never driven outside of Paris," said this talkative driver. "Before that I was a postilion at Monsieur Calliard's. Monsieur Laffitte is buying up all the diligences now. Bonafous and Calliard can hardly compete with him. Monsieur Laffitte has two hundred and fifty carriages harnessed with teams of eight horses, that go all over France. He gets eleven million francs clear in a year. It is hard for the small cabman. When you buy the parts for two hundred equipages, you buy every part cheaper than when you buy for five equipages. And so we shall have to shut up shop. And to tell the truth, I somehow don't feel I want to go on the high road, since the day when I danced with Françoise in the Bois de Vincennes. I bought this pair of horses at the stables of Monsieur Montmorency and go round Paris on my own account. Françoise's brother is a riding-master at the Hotel du Cheval Blanc. You have probably hired horses there; all the quality like to ride at Montmorency from the chestnut wood over the Saint-Denis plain."

Beyle recalled that the sign at the aristocratic stables of the "Cheval Blanc" was painted by the celebrated Gérard, who was a friend of his. There was always a group of young men in riding clothes, gloved, booted and spurred, outside the Hotel du Cheval Blanc. Smart riding-masters of the smartest suburb of Paris sung the praises of their horses. In the square, which was strewn with bright yellow sand, were handsome thoroughbreds saddled in the English style. Cavalcades set out from there towards the rays of the evening sun. In the abbey of Saint-Denis were the tombs of the Kings of France. In the evening young people danced till dawn in the chestnut wood by the light of lamps fixed on the trees.

When Beyle entered the Square of the Children of Bethlehem, it was already getting light. The market was beginning to liven up. Scores of country carts were making for the square. Bearded peasants sat in their vegetable carts. Milkwomen with big cans, chirping cheerfully like the morning birds, overtook in their two-wheelers the lumbering carts of the vegetable sellers. Here and there craftsmen opened up their workshops. Diligences, Favorites and Dames Blanches, were being washed in the coaching yards. Long butchers' carts drove past, creaking with their wheels on the drag, while the legs and heads of calves hung out of them and trailed blood on the pavement. Another hour and the Quartier Latin would begin to liven up, waking a couple of hours before the rest of Paris. At eight o'clock the students of the Medical School

and the Sorbonne were already sitting in the lecture rooms. Only the pompous, sedate officials of the kingdom, with heavy swollen portfolios walked along the boulevards and streets at nine o'clock smoking pipes and looking like ministers.

Beyle stopped outside a little garden, dismissed the cabman, took out a pencil and note-book and began to write. He would write a while and walk a while. After going three or four hundred paces, he would turn back, glance up at a window between two trees, go back and set off again. Several hours went by in this way, till at last the blind was pulled up. Beyle doffed his hat and bowed with a broad gesture, prolonging his greeting so that it would be observed. The figure that appeared at the window did not show any great surprise. She nodded her head. A quarter of an hour later a lady in a white dress and a wide hat came out at the gates with a long sunshade. Smiling, she offered her hand to Beyle with a gaiety and ease that indicated a tranquil mind and complete freedom of manner.

"So again you want to enliven my morning walk," she said. "I thank you. But you look tired, as though you've had no sleep all night. What is the matter?"

Beyle told her about the previous evening. When he got to the story of Lieutenant Louaut, she burst out laughing and said: "I read that story in *Le Constitutionnel*. Aren't you ashamed of having robbed the poor lieutenant!"

"The whole point is that article in *Le Constitutionnel* was mine. True, they mutilated it terribly, doing away with the heading and rejecting my protest against the fifty thousand priests who govern France, in which I oppose the moral philosophy of my old teacher, the materialist Helvétius, to the moral philosophy of the Christian philosopher Victor Cousin. But listen, dear Jules . . ."

"Please remember that I only permit you to address me like that in letters," replied his companion. "Well, what do you want to say?"

"I want to ask you whether you can suspect me of plagiarizing little articles?"

"Little ones—no, but I heard that you stole whole books."

"What does 'stole' mean? The whole world of beautiful phenomena belongs to me, as it does to you evidently."

"Yes, but I have no intention of publishing your *Promenades dans Rome* under my name, although *Les Promenades* is also a beautiful phenomenon."

"But you intend to give me a lecture?"

"No. I admire the clever thief, who reveals far more talent than the owner of the stolen things. I only wish there to be perfect frankness between us. Now tell me how your *Julien Sorel* is getting on."

"I have decided to change the title of the novel. I am going to call it *Le Rouge et le Noir*. Let the bourgeois think that it deals with roulette, the lottery of their luck. I am much more interested in the colour definitions of time. Red evokes very many recollections. Twenty years ago the French wore that colour, which swallowed up all the others. At present it is the black streak of French history that has arrived."

"I should say the white. It is the colour of the Bourbon arms, the colour of the royal lilies. It is not for nothing that the Government newspaper is called *Le Drapeau Blanc*."

"You are right, of course. I shall make use of the suggestion. But the black colour of the clergy and officialdom is the real colour of present-day society."

"At least of a part of it. I make this reservation, my friend, because . . . well, I'm going to speak frankly. You must know that all is not well in Paris at present, that there is great unrest in the provinces. You know that a class



of poor people has sprung up in the town. You know that there are many discontented people and that they openly speak of overthrowing the dynasty. There is a part of society to which the colour black cannot apply at all."

"I am very glad that you understand. It might have been otherwise—your father was closely connected with Napoleon."

"My understanding of events I owe entirely to my observation. What interests me most of all is the life of France outside the salons. By the by, where have you been lately?"

"I was at Gérard's house a very long time ago. I saw there some Poles, the former Russian Minister Prince Czartoryski and his wife. I tried to go to Madame Récamier's, but she was ill or said she was. Chateaubriand's carriage was outside. Madame Chateaubriand was sitting in the carriage, while her husband, according to the manservant, had been a whole hour with Madame Récamier."

"That is just like Chateaubriand. If you only knew how ridiculous I find that ungifted writer with his *Génie du Christianisme*! If only he had left his wife at home, instead of keeping her waiting in the carriage at the door while he visited the aged Christian beauty. By the by, my friend, Chateaubriand has arrived from Rome for a short while. He has found some plans of yours and speaks very gloomily of you."

"We have no sympathy for each other. He has the right to 'speak gloomily.'"

"Listen, dear Beyle, if you are free to-day, let's go for a little walk. I am at your disposal, as Monsieur Gauthier has gone away."

"Your husband is a very nice man, but if he has already gone away, allow me to sit with you in the drawing-room."

"If you like."

Beyle and Judith Gauthier turned back.

"Well, tell me about Hugo," said Madame Gauthier, sitting down in an armchair opposite the little divan, on which Beyle was sitting, leaning slightly against a bookcase.

"I am rather anxious about Mérimée's enthusiasm for that windbag Hugo. I don't know what they can have in common. I read the bombastic preface to *Cromwell*. It is a monstrous mixture of Christian twaddle and distortions of the very best Romanticism. What do Hugo's plays amount to? Two years ago the best actors in the world—English actors—came on a visit to the Paris stage. Five of Shakespeare's tragedies were put on. Hugo derives from them. His weak head could not stand the strong drink, and he began to babble all kinds of nonsense."

"All the same, they say he has written a beautiful play. It is going to be produced at the Théâtre Français. What surprises me is your indignation at Mérimée's friendship with him. You forget that in the days of your military youth you had similar enthusiasms."

Beyle shook his head.

"Don't deny it. At present there are no wars and the desire for youthful heroism is frustrated. Literature has taken the place of war. Two young combatants enter the battle against the old literary ideas. They march shoulder to shoulder, arm to arm, and admire each other. Let them admire each other, for they are both younger than you . . . by how much?"

"Two months, madame! Aren't you reminding me too often of my forty-seven years. No doubt, Clara and Hugo are little boys in comparison with me, but that does not mean . . ."

"No, it means everything. You must be indulgent."

"The greatest possible error! One can be indulgent towards a schoolboy who has not learnt his lesson, but a man who has published a book cannot claim indulgence. If you want indulgence, don't publish anything but sit at home and reckon up your revenues from the factory or works. In one respect you are right—there will be literary battles. The pity is that they will only take place over some silly play like *Hernani*—a cheap concoction from Shakespeare's *Two Gentlemen of Verona*."

"I see you are angry to-day. I am even more angry than you are. I think Balzac is right in saying that the same thing is happening to Italy as to France. Society is changing its face. I don't even know whether we shall be able to change sufficiently to understand what is taking place. I don't know whether those who are taking part in the life of to-day understand it better. Perhaps in some respects it reveals itself better to the onlooker, if only he really studies life. I have long been observing you, Beyle. All have their affairs, their everyday cares, but you alone follow the changes of this strange world with the eyes of a person unable to find his place. You are offended by the fact the world of big, general affairs has disappeared. I will tell you straight out: you are not necessary to modern society. In Paris you are appreciated for your wit, but the ledger is far more important than your *Promenades dans Rome*. Is not the sun which shines on the factory chimneys and poor workers of Saint Antoine the same sun that bathed the fields of Austerlitz with evening light?"

"You are talking admirably to-day, Jules. You are absolutely right in everything. You are a most enchanting sage in a skirt."

"You want to turn my good sentiment into ridicule. I noticed that also last time, when we were passing the Café des Vélocifères at Montmorency."

Beyle took her hand.

"You must forgive me this raillery. It does not relate to you in the least. Your house is the only place where I feel quite free from the painful irritability which the salons of Paris force on me. The raillery is due to my fear of losing the aptitude for it. What would become of me then?"

"My friend, you are fairly consistent and you never forget about yourself."

"You asked me to be frank."

"This time I repent of my request less than ever. Tell me, if you please, about Cuvier. What is his little step-daughter like?"

"Ah, Sophie Duvaucel! She is a very sweet creature, a charming girl, intelligent, extraordinarily good natured. She knows the affairs and social connections of every one of us. She tries to help everybody and to do everybody a kindness. In short, the type of secret nun, who carries out her vow in the salons."

"Again I fail to understand whether you are laughing or talking seriously."

"Seriously, of course. She lives in the Jardin des Plantes, and Mérimée considers her to be the best plant of all those under the care of Academician Cuvier. By the by, the great savant has re-arranged his house—he has a whole museum adapted for work. I have seldom met a man, who was organized to such an extent. His daily work is mapped out by the clock from six in the morning. In every room, according to the particular science studied, is gathered everything necessary for the work of the day; there is a separate writing-table on which is placed the work already begun. In one room he is a geologist, in the next a botanist, then a zoologist, mineralogist, then a historian and anthropologist. In the evening he enters a no less interesting study where his friends

foregather. There, after the lecture at the Sorbonne and his intense daily work, he is a most fascinating conversationalist. I think he has one of the best salons in Paris. Recently I met there a man of exceptional intelligence and vast knowledge, a Russian. I don't remember his name. I only know that according to Virginie Ancelot he travels from town to town to listen to the most famous savants. His life is one prolonged and rather ridiculous race: he jumps out of a diligence, listens to a lecture in Heidelberg, then rushes off headlong to Weimar, thence to Frankfort, and so on without end. He is some important high official of the Tsar. At present he is busy in Paris settling the affairs of his brother. I will tell you about him in detail later on. Cuvier has a very high opinion of him. So have I as he belongs to that group of Russians who hate slavery. His brother turned out to be a Carbonaro and, so I heard, was sentenced to death. Berchet pointed him out to me at Cheltenham. He was standing on the bank of the river with his arms folded on his breast, tall, aloof, melancholy, and apparently engrossed in his thoughts."

"You know I don't like Russians at all. I don't think I shall ever be able to take any interest in their country."

"Neither shall I," replied Beyle. "But this man is attractive as a European, and the fate of his brother has made both of them interesting to me. By the by, is your brother at the Polytechnic?"

"Why do you jump from one idea to another, Beyle. What has the Polytechnic got to do with it?"

"The Polytechnic, madame, is the place where I studied and from there I went into Buonaparte's Dijon army. I am concerned about the fate of the Polytechnic. I know that that school, which was founded by the Convention, is seething with indignation at the condition of France. The question that interests me is whether the Government of Charles X, which has executed all the surviving members of the Convention, will not desire to execute that child of the Convention as well. In speaking of the Russian conspirators, I was thinking of the fate of the student of the Polytechnic."

"My brother says that if the Government does not disband the Paris Polytechnic, it is merely because it knows nothing about its internal life, and its ignorance is simply because the whole school lives as one man. Nobody betrays them."

"But are they preparing anything?"

"That I don't know."

"Tell your brother that nothing will come of their activity. Charles X has returned from visiting the northern camps cheerful, pleased and smiling, thinking that the disguised gendarmes who acclaimed him with cries of welcome were good, kind-hearted people, who next to God love their king above all else. The St. Omer camp is mobilized. They say that that old Jesuit, the half paralytic idiot Prince Polignac, will soon be recalled from London to the post of Minister in Paris. In general we are getting more and more into a cul-de-sac. Even Madame Ancelot's monarchist salon is filled with doctrinaires who talk of a change of dynasty. A certain Godefroy Cavaignac has appeared, who is said to have organized a republican party."

"Tell me, Beyle, do you belong to the Carbonaro movement yourself?"

"I don't belong to the French Carbonaro movement. I consider it to have been compromised by that fool La Fayette and the Saint-Simonists with their absurd system. You know what Saint-Simon's disciples Bazard and Enfantin have done? They have divided up the whole world into productive and

non-productive groups. In the first they put the industrialists, the knights of industry who are building a new world; in the second, the landed aristocracy and the old nobility. That crank Saint-Simon refused to realize that the industrialist thinks only of gain and not at all about the Christian transformation of the world, and that there exists a far more terrible enmity—the enmity between the man who sells his labour and the man who buys it—the industrialist.”

“Yes, I have read *The Industrial Catechism*. In reality it is a paradoxical eulogy of the bourgeoisie, it is Christ at the accountant’s desk, saving the world with a ledger in his hands.”

“A sheer fairy-tale in the style of Hoffmann. By the by, have you read that whimsical writer?”

“Yes, I’ve read him. I don’t like him. Tell me, is it true that your Doctor Koreff was portrayed by Hoffmann in some fairy-tale or other?”

“Not in a fairy-tale, but in a whole series of tales. He is one of the ‘authors’: he is Vincent of the *Serapion Brothers*.”

Beyle glanced at his companion. Madame Gauthier’s big blue eyes were gazing past him at the window. Taking advantage of her absentmindedness, he hastily examined her face. It was smooth, without wrinkles, intelligent and very lively, and framed by dark red hair. The lips remained calm, even when she laughed—quietly and almost inaudibly. Only her eyes brightened up, like blue icicles lighted up by the sun, and golden specks appeared in the blue pupils.

This woman reminded him in some way of Métilde, but without her devoted love of Italy, her ardent atheism, her extraordinary fullness of life, her fascinating Lombardic beauty of feature. Judith Gauthier was a real Parisienne, but she was very intelligent, a good and loyal friend, and understood better than anybody else the thoughts and feelings of Stendhal the writer. Between them there was not even the slightest hint of love or even attraction; nevertheless Beyle missed her when he did not see her for a long time. Madame Gauthier was amused by this rare manifestation of masculine friendship, her complete confidence in his masculine nobility and perfect understanding of her feminine qualities. Once their relationship had been formed it was never interrupted. It progressed very smoothly, growing slowly and developing little by little into a sentiment that was as necessary as air.

At five o’clock that evening Beyle tried in vain to find a newspaper. The usual copy had not been brought to his rooms. The retail sale of newspapers was forbidden. Newspapers had already become terribly expensive: besides the subscription money there was a stamp tax of ten centimes and a postal tax of five centimes a copy. The newspaper publishers were frightened: an insignificant mistake might entail the loss of the deposit of two hundred thousand francs.

He had to go at an untimely hour to the rue du Rempart to get the latest edition at the Café de Rouen. Spreading out the small sheet, he realized why an army man in the omnibus advised another to read to-day’s paper. Daru had died in the night. Beyle dropped the paper, jumped up from the table and, pushing past the people who were coming in, rushed out of the café without seeing where he was going. Tears were pouring from his eyes. He did not remember how he arrived at 81, rue de Grenelle, how he shook the hand of the weeping servant and embraced Gaétan Gagnon whom he met on the stairs. He stood in the crowded room, feeling ashamed and oppressed by a sense of ingratitude towards his dead cousin, who had done so much for him in the days of his youth.

Next morning an ornate hearse stood outside the church of St. Thomas d'Aquin. Three-cornered military hats of the old style with plumes suddenly appeared in the porch as though defying the guards of Charles X. Maison, Jourdan, the Duc de Bassano, Marshal Macdonald, the old fighting generals of Napoleon, like spirits of the past, mighty and huge, passed with arrogant faces through the crowd that made way for them. In a coach nearby sat Academician Cuvier in a frock-coat with a high collar and wearing a black neck-tie and the ribbon of an order. Old guardsmen of Napoleon, soldiers of bygone France, veterans on crutches, minus an eye or an arm, came to pay their last tribute to Count Daru. Beyle, in a black frock-coat, agitated and shaken by the sobs that mounted to his throat, realized once again that he was burying his youth together with the coffin of the man whom he had intentionally avoided for many years. The sounds of the organ came from the church. All around were stern faces, leonine heads, a kind of selection of representatives of a mighty, but vanishing race of men . . . "Another one gone!" said somebody's voice. Beyle broke down and, losing all his self-composure, covered his face with a handkerchief. When he felt better, he began to look around in search of the inhabitants of the château de Bécheville who had once been dear to him.

He did not find either the Countess or her nephews. His attention was attracted by a tall man with curly hair, thin lips, a well-fed aristocratic face and very lively eyes; all of a sudden he remembered the name of this Russian, of whom he had spoken to Judith Gauthier: it was Alexander Turgenev.

## CHAPTER FORTY

THE FOUR BROTHERS, WHO HAD GROWN UP IN THE REIGN OF ALEXANDER I IN THE family of the disgraced freemason Ivan Petrovich Turgenev at Kindyakovka in the province of Simbirsk on the Volga, were educated in Germany and prepared to occupy high posts in Russia. Hatred of serfdom from childhood, a brilliant education, and acquaintance with the life of Europe of the days of Napoleon had set them apart from their contemporaries. The youngest brother, Nikolai, joined a secret society which aimed at the liberation of the peasants and the liquidation of the autocracy in Russia. In 1824 he went abroad for medical treatment. The revolt in the Senate Square took place when he was on his way to the north from Italy. The news of the failure and the very idea of a military plot in such a form gave Nikolai Turgenev a shock. On his arrival in Paris he went to La Fayette for advice and help. The tracking down of the conspirators had already begun. La Fayette helped him to get away to England immediately, as the gendarmes of the Holy Alliance could arrest him in any town of France and hand him over to Nicholas I. In the days when the Tsar's secret agents were looking for Turgenev on the road from Italy to Switzerland, Turgenev went to the north of the British Isles, avoiding London and the big towns. The *Moniteur Universel* published a report of the Petersburg affair and the sentence of death passed on Nikolai Turgenev by the supreme criminal court. Then his brother Alexander hastened to warn him. In Paris Alexander and Sergei Turgenev thought of ways to help their younger brother. Sergei Turgenev, unable to endure the grief, lost his reason and died shortly afterwards. Alexander remained alone. He appealed to Madame Razumovski, a woman who had suffered a good deal of misfortune

and had been forsaken by her husband, to see Nikolai when she arrived in England, as Alexander Turgenev himself was not permitted to leave France. Meanwhile the Tsar had asked the British Government to hand over Turgenev, but received no reply. The intervention of La Fayette and the London freemasons at the time when the British Government were hesitating saved Nikolai Turgenev. There was no magnanimity in England's refusal to hand over Turgenev. There was merely a passive procrastination and the subsequent dropping of "an unimportant case." It was not until a year later that Alexander was able to meet his brother Nikolai for a short while at Cheltenham, where he had settled. But the rumour went round that Turgenev was being handed over to the Tsar, and this rumour astonished his friends—Zhukovski, the young Pushkin and Chaadayev. Pushkin wrote from his exile at Pskov to Prince Viazemski at Revel, begging him to give up singing the praises of the ocean and the beauties of nature, if Turgenev, betrayed by friends, handed over by enemies, had been seized on a treacherous ship and dispatched by sea to the Tsar. Both the land and the sea appeared to Pushkin to be treacherous elements.

In our abominable age  
 Grey Neptune is the earth's ally.  
 In all the elements man  
 Is tyrant, traitor or a captive.

The alarm turned out to be unfounded. Turgenev was able to get away and collect his thoughts in England. But his brother Alexander was in constant anxiety from then on: he settled his brother's financial affairs, entertained him with letters, sent him books and described in detail, day by day, the most interesting events of European life. Consumed with longing and unrest, he constantly endeavoured to change his place of residence. In Paris he encountered Beyle and Mérimée. He was the same age as Beyle and survived him by three years. Both of them bachelors and lonely wanderers, they had certain common memories, in spite of all the difference in their views. One remembered the days of the Carbonaro movement in Italy, the other grieved for his best friends, who were in shackles in Siberia, and for the fate of his two unfortunate brothers.

After meeting his brother at Cheltenham, Alexander Turgenev arrived in Paris and began to plead for Nikolai through Zhukovski. In 1828 he wrote to his brother in England:

Zhukovski, on receiving my letters (but not those, in which I answered his first letter), got the idea that his letters were not reaching me and poured out his wrath in the following letter of 4th December. Now, probably, he has long been in receipt of my answers as well, although of course it is time he had them. But as far as I can judge by the dates, I appear to have received all the letters from him. He does not know this and there is not a word about anything except the post itself and the Countess. An amazing business! You received my first letter only on 12th November. So there are a good many which you have not received. I don't understand what is happening to the letters. They are being read: that is obvious. But those who read them should at least do their bad business with a certain amount of honesty. If only it occurred to them that if they are permitted to look into other people's secrets they are by no means permitted to abuse them, and the letters, even though they have been read, should be forwarded! This is the result of that damned espionage which cannot lead to anything.

Public confidence is undermined; that for which people are executed in England is done by the Governments in the rest of Europe. And those who carry out such legal illegalities do not stop at them; they neglect the intercepted letters, and often, because of the clumsy way in which the letters are unsealed, destroy important papers on which depends the fate of a private person. If only there were some advantage to be gained from such immorality elevated into a system! What can they learn now from letters? Who trusts the post? What have they gained by violating what is sacred, destroying faith and respect for the Government? It is madness! How can they expect respect for the laws in private persons when the rulers permit themselves everything that is unlawful? I am convinced that the most faithful guardian of public order is not the police or espionage, but the morality of the Government. There will not be disorder in the family, where the conduct of the parents is a model of morality; the same may be said of governments and nations. A free and magnanimous form of action serves as a testimony and, at the same time, a safeguard for authority. Measures undertaken for the preservation of public peace are almost always the real causes of disorders; instead of pacifying, they provoke unrest. But where have I got to with the post? All this is for those, who think they have a right to read this letter.

On reading this letter, Nikolai Turgenev shook his head and made a note on it opposite the words "that for which people are executed in England is done by the Governments in the rest of Europe."

"Unfortunately, even the British Government is no exception in this case; at least not very long ago it opened letters by virtue of the order in Privy Council during the war with Napoleon. This order was kept secret from the public; but on the occasion of one of those outbursts which occur so often in Italy against the Austrian Government, *the correspondence of Mazzini who was living in England was intercepted in the post and communicated to the Austrian Government*. Some members of parliament got to know about it and questioned the Minister. The Home Secretary, Sir James Graham, frankly admitted that the letters had indeed been intercepted in the post, but that the Ministers had done this by virtue of the above-mentioned order."

The Mazzini mentioned by Turgenev was a young Carbonaro who carried the secret documents of Confalonieri from Milan to Turin during the Piedmontese revolt in 1821. Confalonieri invited Charles Albert to cross the frontier, drive the Austrians out of Lombardy and to do what was necessary to change Italy from a "geographical concept" into a living and united country. As is known, the Carignan Prince Charles Albert, who was a pseudo-Carbonaro, betrayed the movement. The Milanese revolution failed. In the years when the correspondence between the Turgenev brothers was taking place Mazzini was in a Savoy prison. But the youth of Italy read his letters. In Florence the citizen Viesse opened a public reading-room, in which Mazzini's letters were concealed among the books.

At that time the compositors of a printing works at Lugano were secretly setting up Silvio Pellico's notes written in invisible ink on cotton.

Alexander Turgenev chose Paris as the most convenient place in which to live and to carry on his solicitations on behalf of his brother. London was not convenient owing to the difficulties of relations with Russia. The Paris of Charles X did not inspire Nicholas I with any great anxieties. The Parisian

salons of those days attracted the Russian aristocracy. There it was easiest of all to create the impression that Nikolai Turgenev's guilt was not very great.

There was living in Paris another Decembrist, Yakov Nikolayevich Tolstoy, who had made secret depositions contradicting the exculpatory depositions of Nikolai Turgenev. Nobody knew anything about Yakov Tolstoy's depositions and therefore they were all the more dangerous. Alexander Turgenev, who regarded Yakov Tolstoy as a comrade in misfortune, decided to go and see him and, unaware of his treachery, to suggest to him that they should join forces in defending themselves. Alexander Turgenev arrived heavy-hearted in Paris. In his letters he constantly assured his brother of the favourable course of the affair, trying in this way to deceive the secret readers of the correspondence from Paris to London. He was even cautious in the entries he made in his diary. Only from time to time the figure of a lozenge appears on its pages as a sign of secret meetings with unnamed friends, the brethren of a Masonic lodge.

*A. I. Turgenev to his brother Nikolai.*

"17th August, 1829, letter No. 21. Evening. Rue des Boucheries, St. Honoré, Grand Hotel de Normandie, No. 6. I arrived here at midnight yesterday. It rained all the way from Brussels, and the Laffitte diligences are not very comfortable when all the places are occupied. There were six of us in the back part of the coach, besides a couple of children. I passed through Mons and then arrived at the frontier, where they inspected us and opened all the trunks; they forgot one of mine. A woman felt the women all over—everything and everywhere. After we had gone on a few miles there was another examination and a third in Paris itself."

*Diary of A. I. Turgenev.*

"I arrived in Paris through the Villette gate. I went to see Guizot, who explained to me the situation in France and the state of the parties.

"On 17th August wept over Sergei's coffin.

"12th September. Was at the funeral of Daru in the church of St. Thomas d'Aquin, saw Maison, Jourdan, Macdonald, the Duke of Bassano. Cuvier sat in a carriage.

"La Fayette is travelling about France, recalling everywhere the revolution.

"20th September. Met at Cuvier's the lawyer Sutton-Sharpe, whom I used to know in London.

"26th September. Evening at Cuvier's. With Koreff, Buchon, who publishes chronicles, Mery . . . m . . . ?—the author of *Clara Gazul*. Cuvier showed us the skull of Descartes, presented to him by the Swedish chemist Berzelius.

"30th September. Evening with Koreff at Gérard's—painter of the picture of the days of the Huguenot troubles 'The entry of Henri IV into Paris in 1574.' "

*A. I. Turgenev to his brother Nikolai.*

"I received your letter No. 28 on 9th November. After reading it in the Jardin des Tuileries I met Labensky of London and asked him which of the novels not translated into Russian was the best and latest. He referred me to *La Chronique de Charles IX* by Mérimée—his friend, with whom I had a talk at Cuvier's the day before yesterday. He promised to send a couple of small packets to London to-morrow through the French and the British Embassies. I was not satisfied with his advice and went to young Madame Guizot, who recommended Mérimée's *Charles* as the best, mentioning also *La mort d'Henri III—scènes historiques* par Vitet. I am sending both volumes."



*Diary of A. I. Turgenev.*

"9th November. Received No. 28 from brother at Cheltenham. I replied to him with No. 32 through Labensky (of London).<sup>1</sup> Am sending brother two packets—in one the twelfth part of Karamzin's *History* and a poem of Pushkin,<sup>2</sup> and in the other *Chronique du règne de Charles IX* by Mérimée and *La mort d'Henri III* by Vitet. Evening at Svietchina's. Subscribed to *L'Universel*. On the whole, its colour is white, that is, in the spirit of the Government.

"20th November. Madame Récamier asked me to come on her reception day for some political confidence or other.

"Went to Koreff's.

"21st November. Enrolled for lectures in comparative anatomy at the Jardin des Plantes. Had talks with Svietchina about brother. Matusevich. Tolstoy.

"27th November. Countess Nesselrode invited me to Svietchina's to discuss the matter. Went there and showed Tolstoy's letter, brother's remarks about secret societies in his journal. She promised to let know through Svietchina. Matusevich took my letters and books to-day. Evening at Svietchina's. Talk at fireside about Russia. Duvaucel."

Alexander Turgenev went to see Yakov Tolstoy. He asked him point-blank to show him what information he had given about himself to the commission of inquiry. Yakov Tolstoy rummaged a long time, found everything but what he was looking for, and at last came across the rough copy. Nervously, averting his eyes from Alexander Turgenev, he showed it to him. It was an insignificant document. It simply stated that it was not Turgenev but Siemienov who introduced Yakov Tolstoy into the secret society. "Even that is a good thing," thought Alexander Turgenev. Meanwhile there fell out of the document which was folded in four a scrap of paper, which Yakov Tolstoy hastily picked up. When he straightened himself up, his face was red, his eyes were dim. He seemed to have suffered a great strain in bending his head. Alexander Turgenev held out his hand towards the paper that had fallen. Tolstoy pretended not to notice this gesture and put a large book on top of the paper. Then with a nonchalant air he asked Turgenev for money. Turgenev did not give him any.

Living in Paris as an émigré, Yakov Tolstoy was anxious to regain the good will of the Tsarist Government. He wrote patriotic exposures of books, pamphlets and newspaper articles which criticized Russia. He wrote a pamphlet on Ancelot's book *Six Months in Russia*, and availed himself of the opportunity of expressing his patriotic sentiments. On 20th June, 1825, Beyle wrote with indignation to London :

"There has appeared a book by a certain Monsieur Rabbe—*The Essence of Russian History*. It is an excellent short review. Rabbe shows us the Russians as they are, scarcely more civilized than the Turks, and much below the Turks, as the Orthodox are far more odious than the Mussulmans. And now a Russian nobleman of the name of Yakov Tolstoy has dared to attack Rabbe, ridiculing his name which in Russian means 'slave.' The base and servile review published in Paris by Monsieur Julien accepted for publication these attacks of the Russian nobleman on a man who is respected by everybody and earns his living with the labour of his pen, in contrast to Monsieur Tolstoy, who devours the bread of his serfs."

Nikolai Turgenev wrote to Tsar Nicholas Romanov a note stating that he

<sup>1</sup> Brother of the Russian Consul in Paris.

<sup>2</sup> "Poltava."

did not consider himself guilty in the affair of 14th December, as he had not been in Russia for over a year before that event, and that he did not consider himself guilty against Nicholas I personally, as he had not expected to see this Grand Duke on the throne. The whole affair was in Zhukovski's hands.

Alexander Turgenev diligently studied the book written by Kamper, who proved that the northern revolt of 14th December, 1825, was the realization of a big general Carbonaro plan.

Nikolai Turgenev wrote a long memorandum on his views regarding the reconstruction of Russia and secret societies. His brother Alexander went in search of a French jurist, who would undertake to give the memorandum the form of an official document. Young Mérimée offered his services to Alexander Turgenev as a copyist and jurist. But Turgenev, *being afraid of the political views of Prosper Mérimée*, applied to the jurist Renoir, who subsequently dealt with the matter.

Alexander Turgenev spent his spare time attending the lectures of Cuvier and Guizot at the Sorbonne. Beyle's spare time was spent in feverish work on the novel *Le Rouge et le Noir*. He walked along the boulevards and about the suburbs of Paris pondering on the fate of his hero, who was unable to find a place in life for the outlet of his energy. To direct this energy towards the Church and the reaction of the nobility seemed to him revolting, and to turn Julien into a commercial money-making machine seemed to him no less revolting. Of course Julien refused the offer of the timber merchant Fouqué to become a partner. Two classes of society, the landed aristocracy and the urban industrialists, were opposed to each other, trying to turn parliament into an arena for taxation warfare, while the real living France was completely voiceless. What was a man who came from the peasantry or the poor class of the towns to do in such a case? Julien was now at the peak of his glory. He was involved in an aristocratic intrigue. He had the chance to enter the army. This happened in days when three thousand émigrés were given the best posts in the state, ousting the well-merited workers of the Revolution and companions of Napoleon's exploits. Another seven thousand candidates awaited their turn. Regiments and battalions of Royal Life Guards were created for them. Six thousand good-for-nothing men composed these Life Guards. They cost France twenty-one millions a year. Julien joined a regiment of dragoons. Whom would he have to fight? Where would the French troops go to?

History did not answer this question till a year later, by which time Beyle's novel had appeared. His hero had perished, finding himself alone in the field, between the fires of the warring classes.

Beyle felt exhausted as he wrote the last chapter. Alexander Turgenev felt exhausted as he wrote the last words of the defence of his younger brother. Both men would meet that evening, and without sharing their experiences of the morning's work, would forget their fatigue among their light-hearted, witty companions.

#### *A. I. Turgenev to his brother Nikolai.*

"29th November. Midnight. To-day in the Russian church I made the acquaintance of a Russian lady, the widow of Naumov, whom I used to know once upon a time at the Shcherbatovs. Her daughter is very nice, and I liked the mother because her first question to me was about you, although she knows about you only by hearsay. Then I sat for over three hours at Princess Gagarin's and chatted about a good many things. A Russian came in, a certain Sobolevski,

a natural son of Simonov and a friend of Viazemski. He told Princess Gagarin in my presence (talking about Viazemski) that he lived at Penza, making a collection of his works, which he intended to publish so as to have the means to go to England and live with N. I. Turgenev. This moved me very much, and I intend to send him some European books."

*Diary of A. I. Turgenev.*

"11th December. Received from Tolstoy a further five hundred francs, nine hundred in all. He still has one thousand one hundred francs. 19th December. Sent No. 40 to brother. Attended Guizot's lecture. In the evening introduced Sobolevski to Cuvier and listened to Beyle-Stendhal, Mérimée and others. Saw the medal for the reconstruction of the *Chambre des Députés*—the only memorial to the ministry of Labourdonnaye."

*A. I. Turgenev to his brother Nikolai.*

"No. 41. Paris, 20th December, 1829. Sunday. Yesterday I posted to you No. 40 and attended a lecture by Guizot, who continued to explain the Middle Ages, drawing a comparison between France and Germany in regard to their political and civic elements of those days. . . . I forgot about Cuvier's lecture and did not go to it. In the evening I took Sobolevski along to him and stayed with his friends till after midnight: usually the great talker Stendhal, the author of a description of Rome and Florence and of saunters in various countries of Europe, who is caustic and sometimes original, and the poet Mérimée remain after tea, and yesterday Cuvier himself was very amusing—with what?—with anecdotes about the Revolution."

Cuvier, knowing Prosper Mérimée's work in the archives, asked him to find a letter of Robespierre's written on the eve of his execution. In the evening of 20th December, 1829, Mérimée handed the letter to Cuvier. Before the arrival of Alexander Turgenev, Cuvier showed the letter with delight to his friends until Mérimée pointed out the colour of the watermark of 1829 on the Lyons paper. Mérimée had written the letter so well that even Cuvier, a great connoisseur of autographs, took it for genuine.

The evening passed in anecdotes of the Revolution.

Alexander Ivanovich Turgenev had managed to convince a number of Russians living in Paris that his brother Nikolai had nothing to do with the secret societies in Russia. Among these people was Sofia Petrovna Svietchina, who had a Catholic salon in Paris. She was a disciple of Joseph de Maistre, a thorough-paced Jesuitical, over-excited woman, who engaged in charitable work. She was the aunt of young Sergei Sobolevski, Pushkin's friend, who first arrived in Paris on 25th November, 1829, and immediately entered into close relations with the literary circle that met at Virginie Ancelot's in the rue Joubert. The interest in everything Russian which characterized Prosper Mérimée during the whole of his life, and a certain similarity of disposition, led to these bachelors of the same age becoming friends. Sobolevski and Mérimée were both born in 1803; Beyle and Turgenev were both born in 1783. While differing in their attitude towards each other, they used to meet at the Ancelots, Gérards, Madame Récamier's and the Cuviers in the years 1829 and 1830. The French writers found in the Russian dilettanti and book-lovers not only readers but also admirers and conversationalists. Sobolevski with his literary taste, excellent knowledge of European languages and brilliant ability to write epigrams in any language, not satisfied with mere success, threw dust

in people's eyes by making himself out to be a Russian grandee. The only passion to which he completely succumbed was the love of books: during his travels abroad he collected one of the most remarkable libraries of Russia. Alexander Turgenev, twenty years older than Sobolevski, was as friendly towards him as towards Pushkin, though with less intimacy. The greater part of Alexander Turgenev's time was spent on his brother's affairs. He devoted his spare time to lectures and gradually settled in a round of work, which subsequently became a strong and serious passion: he collected documents, records and other originals relating to the diplomatic history of Russia. In the days which he described in his diary he was waiting excitedly for news of the revision of his brother's sentence from the poet Zhukovski, who was in close touch with the Court. The final decision was still unknown to him. Nicholas I had said to Zhukovski: "If Turgenev considers himself to be innocent, let him come and trust himself to the mercy of his sovereign." The work of the supreme criminal court was under the direction of Speranski, who had once been liberal-minded and had long returned from exile. He was the secret organizer of the whole work of investigation concerning the Decembrists. But history did not know of this till much later.

*A. I. Turgenev to his brother Nikolai.*

"Paris, 14th February, 1830. No. 51. Sunday. I went from Madame Récamier to Madame Svietchina, and from her to Gérard. He himself is unwell, but his wife receives the visitors, and there I found Mérimée, whom they call *the second Voltaire*, but I call him *Klinger* on account of his lamentable philosophy of blasphemy and ridicule: he is the author of *Clara Gazul*, etc. Another Pushkin would have said of him:

"And there was naught that he would bless  
In heaven above or earth beneath.

"In the entrance hall at Gérard's he offered me a ticket for *Hernani*, which is to be performed at 3 o'clock on Thursday, 19th February. To-morrow I will describe my meeting with the poet Hugo and our conversation which lasted half an hour. There also I saw Ancelot and Bérat and paid court to Bérat's wife, and asked Mérimée to get me a ticket for the first performance on Saturday of Hugo's new tragedy *Hernani*, about which the newspapers have been writing for more than four months, as all the seats have already been distributed among the author's friends. It is said that parties of Classics and Romantics are going to foregather to hiss and applaud the new work of the leader of the Romantics."

"No. 53. Paris. 24th February, 1830. 3 o'clock in the morning. I dispatched No. 52 to you to-day or rather yesterday and spent another interesting day, beginning it by reading the newspapers and attending the funeral of a young girl at the church of St. Thomas d'Aquin and ending it just now at Gérard, the painter's. Guizot inquired about you. From him I went on to Pr. Scherb. Had tea, chatted about my sins and at midnight dropped in with Sobolevski at Gérard's, where I found a numerous and interesting company. Sitting with Ancelot's wife, to whom I am beginning to pay court, with Mérimée and his friend Beyle (alias Stendhal), I saw a sweet, pretty, though not beautiful, little face—it was the actress Malibran, the rival of Henriette Sontag, who is delighting Paris with her acting and voice. She was persuaded to sing, and she sang a number of charming Italian-Spanish songs and inspired the old singer

Grassini, who sang after la Malibran in a quavering voice but with the old method, and finally the pair of them sang something from Rossini together. In the interval Mérimée and Stendhal told Madame Ancelot bawdy anecdotes, so bawdy that I dare not repeat them to you. She listened and made them repeat them, and I laughed like a madman and stealthily squeezed the hand of the coquette, who was amiable but already somewhat reserved. She has invited me to her place on Tuesdays. Her husband—an amiable and intelligent fellow—collects merry authors at his Tuesday evening parties, where no bounds are set to the tongues of Mérimée, Beyle and the like.

"I discussed with the chemist Thénard the subject of platinum and the three English chemists who have died, and heard two pieces of Mlle Gay and found her there again with her mother, whom la Malibran and the hostess persuaded to recite *Ses adieux à Rome* and something else, in which there is more poetry but also some too innocent avowals and strange desires: *Je voudrais vieillir pour almer*. I whispered something quite different to Madame Ancelot, and our bawdy conversations began again and ended at the fire-side with Gérard's anecdotes about Moore, whom he met here at the Duke of Orleans' and could not marvel enough at his good fortune in being invited to the table of a prince of the blood.

"I slept too late for Jomard, otherwise I could have completed the evening with some academic conversation about geography.

"4 o'clock in the morning. Time to finish reading *Le National* and go to sleep. To-morrow they will wake me up with your letter. Mérimée told me that to-day and to-morrow Thiers, the publisher of *Le National* and historian of the Revolution, went with Mignet to see Chateaubriand and was excited about an article in *Les Débats*. As though Chateaubriand had had no part in the publication of the newspaper, but Chateaubriand wanted to put on airs with him, so Thiers adopted a different tone in conversation—a grave one—and replied with dignity to Chateaubriand, who moderated his tone a little, wishing to appease the offended journalists. But politeness was of no avail, and Thiers took leave of Chateaubriand with outward coolness and courtesy but with something like enmity in his heart. What will come of all this internecine warfare among the opposition? *Les Débats* is justified by others, for instance, by Guizot, on the grounds that they must maintain the white colour, that is to say, their devotion to the monarchy, only it must be a constitutional one. But *Le National* is beginning to talk of a change of dynasty."

To Monsieur Jules, Saint Denis.

Paris, 1st March, 1830.

At my place you might find the reigning object; the said object is very jealous, because he has seen one of your kind and good letters. I am very weak. Neither champagne nor *Hernani* has done me any good. I will come to see you this evening, Sunday, if I have the strength, but more likely on Monday. When will you be at Madame Clémentine's? I see quite well that you are my enemy, since you take me for a cotton nightcap. I have taken so much opium that my brain is like cotton wool, but you reign in this cotton wool.

DIMANCHE.

This letter was not yet dry, when Beyle heard hurried footsteps and a cautious knock on the door. Comte de Pastoret entered the room. Beyle removed the bandage from his forehead and, screwing up his aching eyes, stared at his visitor. Pastoret tried to behave with elegant nonchalance, but it was obvious that he was feeling a strain and struggling with inward embarrassment. His eyes were

shifty and he avoided looking Beyle straight in the face. Noticing the sprawling signature "Dimanche," Pastoret nervously shifted his gaze to the portrait of Byron hanging on the wall.

"You have never risen so early, it seems," said Beyle.

"You see, I've come to see you about a little matter. . . ."

Beyle looked at Pastoret and recalled what Virginie Ancelot had said about him: 'He is a man, who was visited in his cradle by all the fairies with good gifts, but one, who turned up uninvited, made all the good gifts lead to evil.' "There is everything in this man," thought Beyle. "He is handsome, he is intelligent, he is full of the best intentions, and yet it is seldom that anyone can arouse such disgust as he. He is very much like his father, a noble, who entered the États Généraux as a deputy of the Third Estate. Mirabeau once said of him when he took his seat: 'Look, that is Pastoret. In him the hungry tiger and the well-fed calf live peacefully together. Fortunately, he has a calf's mind.' However, neither Napoleon nor the Bourbons declined his services. He transmitted to his son this capacity to adapt oneself to all Governments. In the end Pastoret the younger is a typical French nobleman, who in contrast to the first ranks of that class is afraid of death. Despising the bourgeoisie, he trembles before it. Being a monarchist, he is nevertheless afraid of any gendarme of the King who suspects him of liberalism."

The silence continued a fairly long time. Beyle, thinking of Pastoret, seemed to ignore his presence. Pastoret was apparently struggling with contradictory sentiments and trying to make some desperate decision. At last he began to speak in a broken voice, covering up his agitation with a cough: "You know of course that they sometimes entrust me with unpleasant affairs. The Prefect of the Paris police, Monsieur Mangin, is rather a hard man—it is impossible to talk to him."

"Oho, it seems to be serious," thought Beyle, "if the matter has gone as far as Mangin. Poor Pastoret!"

"My dear Pastoret, you know quite well that I do not go to the places where Mangin goes, and how can I help such a mighty person as you?"

Pastoret suddenly mastered his feelings: all his nervousness disappeared and he said in a dignified manner: "In the present case the question is whether you are willing to accept my help rather than that you should help me."

At this Beyle began to feel uneasy.

"Do you know this letter?" said Pastoret, holding out to Beyle a large sheet of dark blue paper folded in four. Beyle read:

To Mr. Sutton-Sharpe, London.

Paris, 2nd December, 1827.

Here, my friend, is the summary of our political situation. Excuse the asperity which you may observe from time to time in my language; I have not found other expressions in order to be always clear and rigorously exact.

Most persons who undertake to draw a moral or political picture of France hasten to put forward clear-cut general conclusions. I thought it would be more instructive and above all more interesting for the reader to give as many facts as possible; but as it would have taken up too much space to relate the facts with the necessary details to preserve their face, I have confined myself to stating the facts and indicating the document in which they can be found. Here then are the principal features of the actual position in France, circumstances which will certainly have the greatest

influence first of all on France and, through her, on Europe; for, in the general war which all the peoples have declared on all the Kings in order to secure constitutions, the course which France will take, the talk and the literature of Paris, will always be decisive for Europe.

A king incapable of putting two ideas together, old and profligate, worn out by a stormy youth, not exempt from mean or even unscrupulous acts, adoring ultra-monarchical principles and despising all who are not noblesse, yet courting the people from fear. In other respects not a bad sort of man, and without the hypocrisy of his brother. As long as he is afraid, Charles X will maintain the appearances of justice and some sort of fidelity to the Charter. Out of weakness he will not do anything without consulting his son.

A dauphin without education, of incredible ignorance, but a very honest man, honest even to the point of heroism, if we consider that till six and thirty he lived in his little court, composed of the most foolish men in Europe, whose sole occupation was to calumniate the French people and the Revolution. This Prince is quite reasonable; his esteem for Messieurs Portal and Roy is notorious. His administration, if he ever reigns, will be of the colour which is called in Paris the Right centre. He will keep his oaths, if he ever takes any. In this respect his sincere piety will be useful to France. He has not been involved in scandals; unfortunately, he trembles before his father. The same sobriety characterizes the conduct and conversation of his wife, who is proud of having an illustrious warrior for a husband. Unfortunately she has a narrow understanding; her mind can embrace little at once; she fails to see the most striking features of what is happening; she needs to have them pointed out to her and even then her mind can only grasp them one by one. But when she has understood an idea, she retains it for good. She sometimes regrets that the higher noblesse should have so little intelligence and courage, and that it should be necessary to have recourse all the time to the Third Estate. She remembers the attitude of M. le vicomte d'Escars, who at Bordeaux in 1816, speaking to the Princess herself, refused to take command of a fortress where he might have been exposed to the enemy.

The Duke of Orleans, a subtle, crafty, somewhat avaricious man, has a great fund of good sense; his administration, as regent during the minority of the Duke of Bordeaux, would be Left centre. He keeps aloof from the ultra party of the Faubourg St. Germain, who still regard him as a Jacobin. His mind has the cast of a moderate English Whig peer. He likes the noblesse and has an aversion for the Third Estate. He favours the system of keeping the balance between the two parties, the Whites and the Blues.

All those in France who have time to think, all who have a revenue of four thousand francs in the provinces and six thousand francs in Paris, are Left centre. They wish the execution of the Charter, and slow and prudent progress without any shock. They want the Government to interfere as little as possible with trade, industry and agriculture; they want to confine it to administering justice and getting its gendarmes to arrest robbers. The vast majority of the people of whom I am speaking have great expectations from Louis XIX and regard the government of Charles X as a necessary evil. People expect Charles X to declare himself against the Charter as soon as he is no longer afraid. He puts up with all the excesses perpetrated by the clergy.

The people of whom I speak, while admitting that M. de Villèle's only anxiety is to keep his post, are attached to him as the lesser of the evils to be expected under such a Prince. They want M. de Villèle to remain, because they have a great dread of a successor whom the Jesuit cabal may set up after him.

As for the peasantry and the small tradesmen, they are enjoying the fruits of the Revolution. For these people the game has been won since 1795. When the liberals of the class I have just painted want to alarm the peasants, the latter regard them as madmen: "There are those rascally priests," say the peasants when one has gained their confidence or they are tipsy after their Sunday dinner, "but one fine day we will deal with them (we will kill them)."

Pastoret was gasping for breath, as though the room were too hot. If Beyle was not excited, it was merely on account of the opium which he had taken on the previous day. Before that he had been excited the whole day. Wearing a disguise and passing under an assumed name, he had had a meeting in a suburban tavern with Godefroy Cavaignac, a student of the Polytechnic. He was greatly interested in the plans and intentions of the young men. The contrast between the impressions he had gained in the tavern in the Faubourg St. Antoine and what he had heard in the Paris salons was so striking that he was unable to sleep. He regarded a revolt as inevitable, but doomed to failure. He compared the frame of mind of Godefroy Cavaignac to his own frame of mind as a school-boy at Grenoble. Then the revolution was sweeping on in a mighty wave, which broke down all barriers. But that was thirty years ago. Thirty years ago, in 1799, Beyle had arrived in Paris as a student of the Polytechnic. Now before him at the tavern table sat a similar student, who was full of hope, believed in life, thought that he would live for ever, and aspired to conquer this world, in which he and similar hot-heads would secure earthly happiness. Cavaignac talked with enthusiasm about the French Republic to citizen *Dimanche*.

Such was the name Beyle used whenever he did not want to be recognized. This mysteriousness was made fun of by Mérimée, who said: "You never know where Beyle goes, whom he sees, whom he writes to or with whom he spends the night." "Mérimée is a man of another generation," thought Beyle. "There is much that he is unable to understand and therefore must not know. Let him, who was born at four o'clock in the afternoon, think that evening is the world's eternity." Beyle, with twenty more years' experience of life than Mérimée, and having known the morning of France, could adopt an attitude of calm towards its evening hue, its sunset.

"I don't understand what all this has got to do with me," said Beyle, without however returning the letter.

"You mean to say that the letter is unsigned," corrected Pastoret, holding out his hand for the letter.

"Yes, it is in fact unsigned," said Beyle exultantly.

He unfolded the letter once more and looked at it. Then he folded it again and thrust it under his waistcoat as though absentmindedly.

Pastoret glanced at the writing-table.

"You sign with a day of the week instead of your name. You know of course that there is a Masonic organization called 'The times of the year.' Every six members are called by the days of the week, beginning with Monday.



Their Head is Sunday. Four sevens or four weeks make a month. The Head of the month is called, let us suppose, July. Every three months form a time of the year. Their Head is called Spring. The four times of the year, that is, three hundred and fifty-two men, make a battalion, at the head of which is the Executor. Further on comes the revolution."

Beyle rose and asked with a frown: "What has all this nonsense to do with me?"

"Nothing whatever, of course. Only you sign yourself *Sunday*. Perhaps you are the Head of a Seven?"

"Well, read all this letter, if you please. As you see, it is addressed to a woman and does not concern politics."

"How can it be a woman? His name is Jules who lives near Paris."

"Ah yes, indeed," said Beyle, the colour mounting to his cheeks. "Pastoret, explain to me, if you please, what does all this mean? Where did you get this letter?"

"Do you know, Beyle, I am afraid. I have a physical fear of events. I can tell you that Polignac is being recalled from London. He will be Minister. Everything will go to the devil. The Jesuit Congregation will take the place of the Chamber of Deputies. Our nobles are absolutely blind. It is not those who can render service to the monarchy who go in to the King in the evening, but those who have the most ancient family names of titled nobility, although they may be utter fools. The King thinks about prayer, visions and miracles. In the Palace everybody is in a sort of delirium. Even the Austrian Ambassador, Monsieur Apponyi, a monarchist, said the other day: 'It is a Miltonian paradise of madmen; their condition seems to the eye of any onlooker to be horrible and pitiful, but they wallow in their delirious happiness and feel splendid.' You realize, Beyle, there is no way out: these doomed people with a blissful smile are walking like blind men on the brim of a precipice. I don't want to tumble into it with them. Tell me, what is going to happen to-morrow? When I read your letter, I realized that you alone can tell what the matter is. I don't know how what is known in history as a change will take place."

Pastoret was for the second time afraid to pronounce the word "revolution." Beyle looked at this pitiful and frightened man. At present he was not at all handsome; his face had taken on an earthy pallor, his voice sounded hollow.

"I don't understand how this letter came into your hands."

"That London lawyer Sutton-Sharpe dropped it at a ball at the de Tracys. Madame Lavenelle took it to the Prefect of Police, but I recognized your handwriting at once. They will rack their brains a long time trying to avoid putting a direct question to the English lawyer regarding the author of the letter."

"Lavenelle, that bitch? She can't see a single General pass without her eyes glaring like a hungry dog's. What has she got to do with the Prefect? Mangin is thin as a rake. What does she want him for?"

"You don't know anything: both Madame Lavenelle and her husband are in the pay of the police."

"Impossible! I have often met Lavenelle at de Tracy's. He would never leave La Fayette. Lavenelle himself is an old Terrorist of 1793. He listened to every word that La Fayette uttered. The other day I heard Lavenelle make a flaming speech about American democracy. How he extols New York and the American republic!"

"He gets big money for that. Well now, go and see Sharpe and tell him to mention the name of some dead Frenchman. You must agree that if he says

that the author of the letter is Beyle, it will be unfortunate for Beyle. Witnesses will be found who will attest that you are an atheist. They don't stroke you on the head for that nowadays. In a whole number of towns in the south the civic authorities have been changed merely because the officials were Lutherans or Calvinists."

"Yes, it is a sort of war against the Huguenots ! It only wants a St. Bartholomew's Night."

"I'm afraid it will be repeated," said Pastoret. "Recently I heard Mangin say distinctly: 'The bourgeoisie will be afraid to arm the workers, and it won't dare to utter a word itself.'"

"Yes, but you have forgotten that when the King disbanded the National Guards, the Guardsmen dispersed to their homes without giving up their arms."

"But what is going to happen, Beyle, what is going to happen ? Advise me what I am to do. You know, that old fox Talleyrand is going to buy an estate in Switzerland. That is a very bad sign !"

Seeing Beyle enter the room, Sutton-Sharpe took off the napkin and dismissed the hairdresser. Then he said to Beyle cheerfully: "When people come so early to a lawyer, it means that his practice is beginning. Sit down, who has wronged you ?"

"Stop joking, my dear. I come to ask you for protection against an absent-minded man who betrays his friends into the hands of a prostitute of the boulevards."

"Dear Beyle, in my opinion you need to see a doctor. You aren't looking well, and if you really have been well, shall we say in the hands of the kind of person you mention, it is medicine, not the law that can liquidate the consequences. Will have you some coffee ?"

"No, thank you."

"What about a glass of whisky ?"

"If you please."

After taking a drink, Beyle silently handed a crumpled blue letter to Sutton-Sharpe. The latter took the letter in his left hand—the fingers of his right hand groped about the table in search of his big gold-rimmed spectacles—then he calmly unfolded the letter and read it from beginning to end, as though for the first time.

"Remarkably true," he said. "Every word is as good as gold. The whole point is that instead of Louis XIX d'Angoulême you will have, sooner or later, Louis-Philippe d'Orléans, the very subtle"—he tapped the letter with his ring—"the very same subtle rogue of whom your correspondent writes. Well, what then ? Why must your English friend turn into your lawyer in Paris ?"

The point is that this letter has already been in the hands of the police," said Beyle.

"But I'm not afraid of your police. I say: Damn your police !"

"Yes, but I don't want them to damn me," said Beyle.

"More likely you don't want them to damn this letter. It is not signed."

"The point is that at the place where you lost it they know the author's handwriting."

"Pardon me, if you please, I did not lose it—I showed it to Monsieur Lavenelle."

Beyle rose, put the glass of whisky on the table and stepped back a few paces.

"What's that you say ?" he asked.

"Yes, I showed it to Lavenelle. He is a liberal, a man of my views, broad-minded and with a very interesting past."

"But with a very interesting present, I venture to assure you. And you said the letter was from me?"

Here the lawyer stood up. Tall, broad-shouldered, he fixed his sullen eyes on Beyle and said: "You seem to have made up your mind that I am a block-head. Forgive me, but I have sixteen secretaries, two of whom have to live permanently in Paris in connection with my business and keep me informed of French affairs on behalf of my commercial clients without troubling about their expressions. One of these two died last year. I said that this letter was written by a deceased secretary of mine, a Frenchman, the son of a British subject. His name was Patouillet, his father emigrated to London in 1790. What have you to be anxious about?"

Beyle felt annoyed with himself.

"It seems I have spoilt your friendship with Lavenelle," he said.

"Not at all," replied Sutton-Sharpe. "Things that don't exist have the advantage that they cannot be spoilt."

*A. I. Turgenev to his brother Nikolai.*

"12th March. Midnight. Just returned from the theatre 'De la porte de St. Martin,' where I was in the Ancelots' box and saw first the insignificant play *Les 10 Francs*, and then *Nini*—a parody of *Hernani*. There were some very amusing scenes and the parody of the bombastic verses was very successful. We laughed heartily, and no conspiracy of Hugo's friends could keep us from laughing, especially at the parody of the well-known monologue, as anybody who has seen *Hernani* can hardly see the tragedy a second time without laughing, because the actors are parodied as well as the play, and in spite of the charming art of Mlle Mars, her rival in the parody imitates her in the most comical manner, so that it is just as impossible to look at Mlle Mars, especially when she is struggling with death, as it is to read Goethe's *Werther* after Pauthier. The success was all the greater because all Hugo's friends had been ordered to go to *Hernani*, which was played for the tenth time apparently at the Théâtre Français to-day, where the opposition is already beginning to hiss, and the applause is drowned by the laughter of the Classicists. The author was called for, and an actor announced that the parody was the work of three authors.

"After *Nini* they performed *L'Homme du Monde*, a melodrama by Ancelot himself, which I saw two years ago at L'Odéon. I sat between the author and his wife. Unfortunately Sobolevski and the author went behind the scenes and I remained alone with his wife under the eyes of the Shuvalovs. Semi-declarations and semi-confidences began, and she revealed to me as a secret that her husband was living with the beautiful actress, who played the chief role in his play, that he had not told her about it, as he usually owns up to his pranks after changing one mistress for another, but she always guessed from his remarks about the actress who enjoyed his favour. And indeed, the husband no sooner returned from behind the scenes after knocking beforehand on our door than he began to praise the actress in a roundabout way, and his wife gave me a pinch to confirm the truth of what she had said about him. This scene continued also in the carriage in which we took our seats when it was already past midnight; I was late for tea at Sverchkova's and had to go to bed with an empty stomach, as I missed the tea hour, flirting and chattering. In the morning I was at Madame Ancelot's again. She is intelligent, but her charms are already wilting."

Sobolevski and Prosper Mérimée sauntered about Paris. Mérimée, who was again busy with Slavonic ballads, had just read Sobolevski's poem *The Dying Haiduk*. Sobolevski recited it in Russian and Mérimée listened eagerly to the sound of the unfamiliar language. Then, taking a cab, they drove about Paris without any aim, spending the time in idle chatter. In the rue Coquillière they stopped in front of a huge oil-painted sign with life-sized human figures: a kneeling girl stretching out her hands to a woman with a cupid on her shoulders. The inscription on the sign ran: "*A la déesse de l'amour.*"

"Won't you avail yourself?" said Mérimée, pointing to the door, on which was a notice to the effect that it was an agency for persons of both sexes wishing to enter into lawful wedlock. Sobolevski laughed and pointed to the other side of the street, where a sign of similar proportions, painted by a talented artist of the School of Painting, depicted a woman with her eyes raised to heaven with a look of supplication; she was holding up her pinafore to catch a baby falling from the clouds. Underneath was the name of a midwife.

"Won't you avail yourself?" asked Sobolevski.

"No, thank you, my heavens are cloudless," replied Mérimée.

Sobolevski eagerly devoured the caricatures of *Le Charivari* and halted with curiosity in front of a shop-window with a portrait of the King, made out of sausages. He went with Mérimée to a hairdresser to get his side-whiskers done *à la jeune France*.

In the evening they dined with Turgenev and Beyle at Chéret's at the Palais-Royal. Mérimée talked about the mechanism of Paris literary fame. The so-called Comité de Lecture published, for fees, reviews and notices in all the journals and newspapers by virtue of which the authors of trivial works—Mortonval, Dinojour, Ricard—enjoyed enormous success, whereas Alfred de Musset and Théophile Gautier, who did not pay the fees for reviews, were never mentioned in the Press.

From Chéret's they sauntered about Paris again, halting in front of the shop-windows displaying cashmere and velvet waistcoats, exchanging a few words with the women selling white stockings, and going into the book-shops. When evening came and the gas lamps lighted up the show-windows of the jewellers, they went to the cabaret *Au Pauvre Diable* near the Ourcq Canal. There, halting beside the sign which depicted a dead-drunk policeman sitting at a table among the coachmen and cab-drivers and shaking hands with a couple of bandits while a street urchin steals the peruke from his head, all four discussed with great earnestness whether they should order onion soup with red wine or some other even more unusually plebeian dish.

Sobolevski took out of his pocket a copy of *Le Charivari* and wrote the order in pencil across a caricature depicting Talleyrand initiating Thiers among the doctrinaires. Thiers in the form of a baby with the face of an ape with enormous spectacles was wrapped up in a copy of *Le Journal des Débats*, while Talleyrand as sponsor pompously laid his left hand on Thiers' head.

"The doctrinaires want to prove that the monarchy, even a constitutional one, and better still a parliamentary one, is necessary to France. They are afraid of a republic," said Beyle, looking at the caricature. "But the whole point is that they want a monarch who is obedient to their own group. I don't believe in a wide revolutionary movement, as the mass of the population is not in the least concerned about whether the Ministry will be composed of nobles who enslave the villages, or industrialists who enslave the towns."

"What is the way out in your opinion?" asked Sobolevski.

"So far I don't see any way out. Obviously the government of Charles X will arouse a great wave of indignation throughout the country, and then any catastrophe is possible. I have the impression that somebody is purposely egging Charles X into the extremes of absolutism in order to hasten the dénouement, and in the Tuileries they have blinded themselves to such an extent that, forgetting about revolution, they are busy exterminating one another while hoping for miracles."

"In the age of steam engines miracles do not even fascinate the provinces," said Sobolevski.

"It seems you also are interested in steam engines, Sergei Alexandrovich?" asked Turgenev.

"Yes, Alexander Ivanovich, I've been thinking about something that makes my head whirl. I shall go to Manchester and Liverpool, study the steam cotton-spinning business there and try to set up steam factories in Russia."

"You are very go-ahead—do you want to enter the industrial nobility?" asked Turgenev.

"I'd learn the Russian language with pleasure if only to know what they are talking about," said Mérimée.

"It is not so hard to do that," replied Turgenev with a smile, and translated his conversation with Sobolevski for him.

"Won't you be sorry to part with your independence?" asked Beyle.

Sobolevski gave him a questioning look.

"I mean to say," replied Beyle to his silent question, "that by becoming an employer of labour you put yourself in a state of contradiction with the vast group of people of the new breed; if the factory inevitably ruins life for them it will leave an ineffaceable mark on your character."

"In what way?" asked Sobolevski. "Cannot one remain one's self?"

"In the path which you are choosing it is impossible," replied Beyle. "Life will oblige you to draw logical conclusions which contradict your will. Otherwise you will be ruined."

"Isn't that the reason why your Sorel refused to accept the proposition of the timber merchant Fouquet?" asked Mérimée.

"Ah, you have already read that chapter in the *Journal Littéraire*?" asked Beyle.

"Yes, I read attentively every number which contains a chapter of *Le Rouge et le Noir*. Life, as you depict it, is terrible and horrible."

Beyle shrugged his shoulders.

"Try to change it. I find no other way out for my hero. If he were older, he would learn to howl like a wolf, living with wolves, but I wanted to get rid of the young man who was always following me. I described him; now he doesn't torment me. At one time he captivated and tortured me, especially," here Beyle began to laugh, "especially when I saw my hero among the seminarists, the future pastors of the church, hungry and jealous lads, who were ready to denounce for heresy anyone who had an extra sausage and sauerkraut on his plate at dinner. That is your type of the present-day average man. I'm afraid that the young people won't forgive me for that bit. I'm afraid that the bourgeois won't forgive me for de Rênal, and the nobles won't forgive me for my de Caylus and de Croisenois. I'm afraid that they will kill my novel. I have already received two warnings from the editor pointing out the necessity of changing the end and omitting Julien's speech to the jury."

"I regard the hero of your novel as an individual case of the manifestation

of the spirit of mutinous unrest which has taken hold of people's minds nowadays," said Turgenev to Beyle.

"Yes, but it is entirely well-founded unrest and the mutiny is explained by our times," objected Beyle.

"I think that mutinous characters have been encountered in all times, but they are pacified by genuine humaneness," Turgenev tried to object.

Beyle flared up. "And it is you who say that, you, the man who uttered the famous phrase that in Paris the value of intelligence is in inverse ratio to the wealth of the possessor!"

"It seems you are not talking about intelligence but about character," said Turgenev.

"I maintain the views of Helvétius, who was convinced of the intellectual equality of people. I mean to say that logic is obligatory for all, but character, will and conduct depend on purely material causes."

"I cannot agree with you at all," objected Turgenev.

"Messieurs, you are not drinking your red wine," interrupted Sobolevski.

They drank the wine while they talked and observed the people who entered the cabaret in scarves and blue blouses, with tired, inflamed eyes. Two young women started a quarrel. From the next room came the sound of artisans singing a song:

*Qui a composé la chanson ?  
C'est la sincérité de Maçon,  
Mangeant le foie de quatre chiens dévorants,  
Tranchant la tête d'un aspirant,  
Et sur la tête de ce capon  
Grava son nom d'honnête Compagnon.*

"What is that?" asked Turgenev. "You know, this is the first time I have been in a place of this kind and I don't understand everything."

Lowering his voice, Beyle said: "A considerable part of the workers of France have formed trades unions, which are not recognized by the law. They are a sort of mutual aid banks known as *devoirs*. But there are more important unions according to the type of craft—these are the so-called *compagnonnage*. The *devoirs* often conflict with one another. You hear they are singing about four dogs—they are neighbouring *devoirs* or *compagnonnages*, which hate one another."

The singing in the next room gave place to shouting. Wild arguments broke out.

"I'll tell everybody what you have done with the arms of the National Guards!" shouted an old workman.

Another blue-blouse restrained him and tried to pacify him.

"Let's go, Uncle Joseph, let's go," he said.

But the old workman went on shouting at the man who was singing: "I don't know what you are preparing, but we old ones won't allow it!"

Turgenev hastily rose. Sobolevski quickly paid the bill for all of them. Beyle looked at them calmly. Turning to Turgenev, he asked: "Tell me, what happened at Lerminier's lecture?"

Alexander Turgenev, whose sole idea was to get away from the quarrel, replied absentmindedly: "Lerminier expressed liberal views in his first three lectures and was applauded by the young men, but in his last lecture he made a speech in defence of the Government and the students threatened him. He was obliged to leave the chair in a storm of shouting and uproar."

Beyle's eyes were laughing. "Apparently he didn't leave by way of the door?" he asked.

Moving towards the door and not understanding the question at first, Turgenev nodded his head. Afterwards, when they were outside the tavern, he replied to Beyle: "Yes, both he and I were obliged to jump out of a window on the first floor. The students were in such a mood that they might have done something very unpleasant to the lecturer."

"You have no luck in Paris nowadays!" said Beyle.

Turgenev pretended not to hear.

When they reached the street, which was lighted with gas lamps, they heard a heavy rumbling of wheels. A battery of artillery was making its way with a speed that was only possible on the best sections of the Paris roads. The huge iron-tipped shafts of the gun-carriages jutted out in front of the horses' muzzles. The four companions stopped and waited till it was possible to cross the road. Beyle noticed a young couple who were walking arm-in-arm. The young man had such a happy, carefree look and the young girl was so gay that they could not help attracting attention. The young man darted from the pavement to slip through the guns and in the twinkling of an eye was killed by a blow from a shaft. Turgenev shuddered and crossed himself. The girl stood on the pavement wringing her hands, unable to utter a word.

"What a terrible death! Everything is the will of the Almighty!"

Beyle stared at him with cold, angry eyes.

"The only thing that excuses the Almighty is the fact that He does not exist," he said. "I don't understand how, if one is logical, one can forgive your Almighty thousands of similar deaths!"

There was an awkward silence. The day which had passed delightfully before this distressing spectacle suddenly seemed to have become oppressive. Without bothering to find any pretexts, the four men parted at the cross-roads and as though by common consent went in four different directions.

Beyle reflected that a revolutionary outburst was inevitable. He recalled how Marmont, the Governor of Paris, had said that any revolt in Paris would now be suppressed within a few hours.

Mérimée felt weakened by the struggle of opposing sentiments: his love for Lacoste and his desire to get away from her. Meanwhile the stifling atmosphere of the everyday life of Paris, and the heavy opium of Catholicism which poisoned the minds of Frenchmen, demanded more and more insistently that he should make some change in his life. He could only do so by leaving Paris. Beyle had rightly appreciated the sentiment of jealousy which always accompanied Mérimée's reflections about Lacoste. Beyle had written to him: "This jealousy is simply lack of confidence in your own feeling. If that is so, you must not allow the disease to get a hold on you. Go off to Italy."

A visit to the gallery of Marshal Soult, who pillaged Spain during the shameful suppression of the Spanish revolution by the French troops, suggested to Mérimée the idea of going to Spain.

"I must do it while the money lasts. I must leave Paris before the political storm breaks, before my own storm carries me too far from the shore," thought Mérimée.

*Diary of A. I. Turgenev.*

"7th June. Madame Ancelot invites me to a farewell evening with Mérimée.

"8th June. Attended Cuvier's lecture on the history of chemistry previous to Lavoisier. The first chemists originated in Germany; even here it was the

Germans who spread the knowledge of chemistry. There were chemist doctors at the Court. There were persecutions on suspicion of poisoning. Went to see Valerie about tickets for the Bibliothèque. Dined at the 'Salon des Étrangers. Evening at Madame Potocka's. Supper at the Ancelots' in honour of Mérimée. Talk about trip to Spain."

*A. I. Turgenev to his brother Nikolai.*

"9th June, Paris. No. 20. I dined at the 'Salon des Étrangers.' I met there Grouchy, who was a diplomat in Spain and has been appointed secretary of the Embassy at Stockholm. I like him very much and he keeps asking me about you with a lively interest. He has made me feel I want to take a look at Spain from the Pyrenees. I have also been invited by Mérimée, whose departure for Spain we celebrated at the Ancelots' yesterday, but I am afraid of the heat, and the police. However, one can get to Barcelona with only a passport from the Prefect of the French frontier. I ended up the evening at the Ancelots'. It was a farewell affair for Mérimée. He told me that the Austrian policy has changed in regard to its opinion of the state of France and the internal policy of the present Cabinet. Metternich is said to have declared angrily in Vienna that the Government was ruining itself, that Austria had never thought minds would have to be so exercised to maintain and strengthen the royal authority. Count Landsdorf said the same thing to the Prussian Ministry in Berlin. They say that this remark has had a great effect. But Polignac still hopes for aid from above, for they say he regards himself as inspired and recently said so to one of his female relations, who was anxious about the monarchy."

Sobolevski, his hands clasped behind his back, paced with the engineer Kennedy up and down the long gallery above the machine room of a Manchester steam cotton-spinning factory.

The same day at Cheltenham N. I. Turgenev read a letter written by his brother in Paris on 18th May, 1830:

Midnight. On returning home just now I found a postscript to the note from Svietchina, in whose packet the letters from Zhukovski and Viazemski were sent, and it is as though a mountain had rolled off my shoulders, or rather my spirit, and I am at ease: *you are not to go to Russia*. The letter was brought by Matusevich. Here is the copy of Zhukovski's letter: 22nd April. *Your brother must not come on any account.*

On 29th June, at half past seven in the evening, Turgenev took his seat in a diligence in the rue Bouloi in order to reach the Pyrenees via Orleans.

Meanwhile Prosper Mérimée was travelling in a coach from the Basque country to Madrid and conversing with a chance companion, a Count Montijo, whole told him how a Russian bullet had pierced his eye during the battle on the heights of Montmartre in 1814, and that he had been obliged to wear a black bandage ever since.

In Madrid Mérimée was well received by the Montijo family. He made friends with the older generation and was condescending towards the younger. Montijo's two daughters, Eugenia and Paquita, were the object of his attentions. He persuaded Miss Fowler, the English governess, not to punish the fifteen-year-old Eugenia and the sixteen-year-old Paquita for their childish pranks. Subsequently Eugenia Montijo, when she became Empress of France, made Prosper Mérimée a Senator and thus unfortunately linked his fate to that of the Second Empire.



## PART FOUR

### CHAPTER FORTY-ONE

EXACTLY A MONTH LATER, ON 29TH JULY, 1830, BEYLE WAS RETURNING HOME by way of the tortuous side-streets, crossing the uneven, humpy bridges, from the faubourg St. Antoine to 71, rue de Richelieu. The artillery battle had died down, but firing was heard both in the eastern and in the western parts of Paris. It had been going on for three days. To-day it was already plain that the revocation of the savage orders "suggested to King Charles and his Minister Polignac by the Blessed Virgin herself" would be of no avail. The dynasty had fallen. Everywhere the white flags with the Bourbon lilies were being torn to shreds; red flags waved on the barricades, but at the same time a third colour appeared: on the barricade of St. Antoine fluttered a black flag with the inscription: "Live working, or die fighting." This gloomy flag with the tragic inscription was the answer to the black reaction of the past few years—to the hunger of tens of thousands of workers and the closing of the factories and workshops.

On 27th July, 1830, a printing works in the rue de Richelieu was approached by a detachment headed by a police commissioner, whose task was to smash the printing machines. Mangin, the Prefect of Police, had asserted that the dissolution of the Chamber of Deputies would not provoke unrest among the masses. He was right. The workers were not concerned about the extension of the electoral privileges among the one hundred and fifty to two hundred thousand French entrepreneurs.

The bulk of the French population were unconcerned about the result of the tax war which had been declared by the bourgeoisie sitting in the Chamber against the aristocrats sitting on the benches of the Peers. But when they began to smash the printing-presses, which had just printed the proclamations regarding the King's arbitrary rule, indignation swept through the Polytechnic and then through the factories and workshops. Ten thousand students and workers came out into the streets. Pick-axes resounded on the paving stones. Carriages, omnibuses, wine barrels, bedsteads, shop doors, street posts and kerbstones, the magnificent trees of the boulevards—all were made to serve. Barricades were set up so that when the cavalry attacked the crowd they would be held up and driven back immediately under the fire of the rebels. The Governor Marmont had an army of 14,000. Neither the cavalry nor the artillery were able to return to Paris. Regiments and battalions refused to shoot. Nevertheless, the alarm was sounded in Paris, the east was lit up with a red glow, and Charles X, playing whist on the balcony at St. Cloud, anxiously asked Polignac: "What does it mean?" Polignac replied: "A flare-up, just a mutiny. It will soon come to an end." But it did not come to an end. The fighting increased. The companies, battalions and regiments of the old National Guards poured out into the streets. Old Guardsmen, who had taken their crumpled uniforms out of the attics and presses and donned the tricolour cockades so familiar to the Paris of 1793, appeared on all sides with muskets, pistols, sabres and tricolour flags. The movement required to be directed. On the second day it assumed an elemental character. In the working-class quarters Godefroy Cavaignac called for a republic. The deputies of the bourgeoisie

assembled at the house of the banker Laffitte and drew up feeble proclamations which were not signed.

Laffitte laughed: "If the blue blouse wins how many of you will want to acknowledge your signatures? If it is defeated you are clean, nobody has soiled any paper with ink." Thiers kept his wits. He issued a thundering leaflet under his signature. The gist of his idea was as follows: "Europe will tear you to pieces for proclaiming a republic. Charles X has shed the blood of the people. He cannot return to the throne. Long live the authority of the Duke of Orleans!"

"What! Have we fought to put a king of the bourgeoisie on the throne in the place of a king of the nobles?" shouted Godefroy Cavaignac.

"Yes, that is what you fought for," replied La Fayette, who was at the head of the National Guards. "Louis Philippe is the best of republics!"

Thus was the treachery accomplished. The movement of the revolutionary masses was reduced to the defence of the interests of the bourgeois leaders. The deputies who had been afraid to sign the act of deposition of Charles X were now not afraid to take action against those very masses whose movement they had exploited. Fifty-seven-year-old Louis Philippe, who now arrived in Paris, behaved with great circumspection. He wanted to see La Fayette and modestly asked for an audience of his commander. Louis Philippe was proclaimed regent. He courteously excused himself to Charles for having taken his place and promised him every assistance. Then he sent for his friends, the Generals, and said: "Go and frighten the old man. Let him go anywhere he likes." Charles departed. The bankers assembled in Paris proposed to Louis Philippe that he should faithfully observe the Charter and they agreed that citizens over thirty years of age, who paid not less than 200 francs in taxes, could take part in the elections to the Chamber. Whereas Charles had been anxious to secure the privileges of eighty thousand land-owning nobles, his successor betrayed the freedom of France for the benefit of 200,000 factory owners and merchants.

We left Beyle in the middle of the street ruminating before the dying conflagration, which reminded him of the spectacle of Moscow in 1812. He had not been out of doors for two days since the night when he saw the huge paving stones piled up in a barrier as high as the cornice of the second storey. On going out in the early morning of 29th July and coming more than once within range of the firing, he was horrified to find that he was unable to return by the same way. There was no abatement of the general alarm and the shooting, but the artillery cannonade had ceased. The cannon failed to reach their objective. They merely shattered the houses in the narrow winding Paris streets and often fired at their own military units.

While Beyle was wondering what to do, he caught sight of an extremely dejected-looking man staggering along the street, escorted by an old man in a blue blouse with a pointed beard and a huge revolver. As the harassed man passed Beyle, he halted.

"Mareste, where are they taking you to?" asked Beyle, recognizing his friend.

The latter gave a start and shuddered.

"I have asked to be escorted home. I'm afraid to go alone."

Beyle joined him.

The commander of the barricade had told the old man to conduct Citizen Mareste to his home and provided him with all the necessary passes.

"I can't help thinking, dear Baron, that you are ill," said Beyle.

"On the contrary, I feel quite well," said Mareste furiously. "You know where the main fighting is taking place at present?"

"I know nothing," replied Beyle. "I can only tell you one thing: I am convinced of the incredible, heroic steadfastness of the workless people and the villainy of all your Laffittes."

"They are just as much yours," replied Mareste. "Do you know what is happening now? Marmont has lost nearly three thousand men. The Versailles reinforcements arrived hungry and dying of thirst. The whole of east Paris is in the hands of the rebels. And in the west, on the left bank, at the Palais Royal, almost outside the Palais des Invalides, two regiments went over to the side of the revolution. Yes, yes, my dear chap, it is a revolution and not a riot. Our gentle Parisians opened fire from the roof of St. Germain l'Auxerrois on the Swiss tirailleurs sheltering behind the colonnade of the royal palace. All the windows are smashed. The pillars are pitted with bullets. Marmont is shut up in the palace, and do you know what I heard? Mérimée descended from the roof of the church of St. Germain and being a poor shot, seized his musket, took aim and killed a Swiss right by the doors of the Tuileries. When the insurgent said he would present the musket to him as an excellent shot, Mérimée declined and said politely: 'I thank you, but I am a royalist.'"

"What nonsense!" said Beyle. "I had a letter from Mérimée in Barcelona four days ago."

"He could have had time to get here in four days."

"Nonsense!" said Beyle. "Mérimée is not a royalist."

"The devil knows what he is," said Mareste.

"Mérimée is a wise man. While we here can't go home without a nurse, he is quite at ease spending the night in wayside inns sleeping on the floor alongside muleteers and gypsies. It is an extraordinary life for him to lead. I think he has grown much stronger and healthier. But how about you, my friend, what are you going to do now?"

"Perhaps you will correct yourself and say: 'What are we going to do now?'"

"I consider the correction to be superfluous," remarked Beyle. "I shall go on writing as before, but you ought not to part with your passports, visas, registrations and other uninspiring cares."

Mareste was annoyed. Beyle continued: "You remember our wager? The last time we met you tried to prove that I would not finish *Le Rouge et le Noir*. I confess to you that I am sorry you lost. Now, seeing the struggles of the red and the black in the streets of Paris, I should have been able to find a solution for my Julien Sorel. But the novel is finished. I must start another."

"But who do you think will get the upper hand? The Republicans or the Constitutionalists?"

"It makes no difference," replied Beyle. "France will be ruled by the Bank."

"What, what?" asked Mareste, amazed.

"Yes, France will be ruled by the Bank. The Duke of Orleans, who will carry out the will of the bankers, has been appointed director of the joint-stock company 'France et Paris.'"

"I don't understand at all."

"Well, that is not my fault," said Beyle rather rudely, "but I think our escort understands me quite well."

The workman nodded his head.

"The citizen is speaking the truth," he said. "If there is not going to be a republic with rights for the workers there is going to be a king with rights for the bankers."

A boy with a dagger in his belt came up and whispered something in the workman's ear. The workman frowned. Then he turned to Mareste and said: "Citizen, permit me to leave you. This boy will take you home. He has a pass the same as I have. You will be safe."

On 15th August, 1830, Beyle wrote to Sutton-Sharpe:

Your letter, my dear friend, gave me the greatest pleasure. I have not written a line the past ten days; that is my excuse for my delay in replying.

To enjoy the spectacle of this great Revolution one must stroll along the boulevard. (By the by, there are no more trees from the rue de Choiseul to that Hotel Saint-Phare where we lodged some days on arriving from London in 1826. They were cut down to make barricades on the pavé of the boulevard. Have you not in England found the secret of transplanting trees as thick as one's thigh? If you meet a man who knows all about it, get some precise information. Procure for us the means of re-establishing our boulevard.)

The farther one gets away from the *great week*, as M. de La Fayette calls it, the more amazing it seems. The impression is like that produced by colossal monuments; by Mont Blanc, which is more sublime seen from the slopes of les Rousses twenty leagues from Geneva than seen from its base.

Everything the newspapers have told us in praise of the people is true. Intriguers appeared on 1st August. They spoil our affairs a little, but very little. The king is excellent; he has chosen two bad advisers; M. Dupin, a lawyer, who on 27th July, after having read the decrees of Charles X, declared that he did not regard himself as a deputy and . . . Interrupted, I decided to send you this scrap of paper. To-morrow I will write to you again. One hundred thousand men turned up for the National Guard of Paris. The admirable La Fayette is the anchor of our liberty. Three hundred thousand men of the age of twenty-five would go to war with pleasure. Paris, defended by the present enthusiasm, would not yield to two hundred thousand Russians. I scribble these bald facts to you, as someone is waiting for me. We are all keeping well. Unfortunately, Mérimée is in Madrid. He did not see this unique spectacle: on 28th July, to one hundred men without stockings or coats there was only one well-dressed man. The lowest rabble was heroic and full of the noblest generosity after the battle.

On 5th September, 1830, Alexander Ivanovich Turgenev returned from his trip in the Northern Pyrenees to the Hotel Coquillière in the street of the same name in Paris. The same day, in accordance with his habit, he made a round of calls. He saw Gagarin, Repiev, Yakov Tolstoy, Madame Svietchina, Madame Récamier and Chateaubriand. The last two blamed Talleyrand for everything in the revolution.

"There is emptiness and gloom in the Tuileries," wrote Turgenev.

"The colour of time has changed," wrote Beyle.

Whereas in the white days it had been impossible for him to take part in the political life of France, he now considered that it was definitely necessary for him to remain outside it. He could do this without violating his loyalty to the bankers' concern known as the Kingdom of France. He wanted to get

away. For this reason he followed up an idea which had occurred to Madame de Tracy and other friends of his. This was to ask the Minister of Foreign Affairs to give him a post as French Consul. A brilliant idea ! It was no sooner conceived than it was put into action.

On 25th September, 1830, Beyle was appointed French Consul at Trieste.

## CHAPTER FORTY-TWO

IN THE EVENING OF 2ND NOVEMBER THEY WERE DISCUSSING OVER TEA AND CIGARS at Monsieur Lafitte's the method of organizing the next elections. Guizot suggested a fairly simple plan. Of course, it would cost money, but that would fully justify itself. It was necessary to pour out a sack of gold in the provinces and to nominate candidates in every constituency. Deputies elected outside the lists of the Ministry of Home Affairs should be provided with everything they needed on arriving in Paris, provided with sources of income and accessory means of earning money in order to convert them from enemies into friends. The listeners smiled a knowing smile and agreed. It was just a private talk on political subjects, and if the proposed system should subsequently be put into operation, it would not appear in any bill or law. Puffing at his cigar, Dupont, who was sitting opposite the Minister Molé, drew his attention with a wink to the Minister d'Argout who was dozing at the end of the table, and showed him the latest numbers of *Le Charivari* containing caricatures of d'Argout.

"Since July the wit of the journalists seems to have gone beyond the limit," muttered Molé. "D'Argout was no sooner made a Minister than they began to make fun of him in the gutter Press."

He looked at the caricatures. D'Argout had a huge nose. The caricaturist had taken advantage of this sport of nature. He depicted a carriage driving through Paris; Monsieur d'Argout's nose jutted out of the carriage and knocked the passing pedestrians off their feet. Another caricature depicted d'Argout stabbing with his long nose the eyes of a man who happened to be passing by.

"Truth stabs the eyes," said Molé, sniggering.

D'Argout woke up and gazed with dim eyes at the men who were laughing.

A third caricature represented d'Argout in his family circle in the Bois de Boulogne. D'Argout, lanky and long-nosed, was seen sheltering his wife and children from the rain with his long nose.

"They are not political caricatures," said Dupont.

"I don't know how Molé can allow it. Perhaps he doesn't know about it ?" said somebody in a group consisting of Sébastiani, Périer and Odilon Barrot.

"What is it I ought not to have done ?" asked Molé.

"You ought not to have allowed Beyle to be appointed Consul," said Casimir Périer.

"Ah, let me alone," retorted Molé. "What does it matter which Frenchman drinks Turkish coffee at Trieste ?"

"It matters a good deal. Why appoint candidates from the White salons ?"

"Beyle is not at all an aristocrat," said Molé.

"No, he is by no means an aristocrat," interposed d'Argout. "He foolishly told me that the hereditary title of peer is bound to turn the eldest son of a family into a blockhead."

"Are you in favour of an hereditary Chamber of Peers ?" remarked Barrot venomously.

"Not at all," replied d'Argout. "I am only against the appointment of Jacobins to consular posts, and as for his having frequented Virginie Ancelot's, let these ageing ladies who are ending their days in Paris go on thinking they are the arbiters of fate."

Molé gave Barrot a disapproving look and said: "Beyle was recommended by de Tracy. I am not in the habit of changing instructions once they have been given. I like Beyle. He is a man of rare intelligence, and in any case it is a good thing that he will not be in Paris."

"What do you think he is?" shouted Barrot angrily. "A Jacobin or an aristocrat, a clever man or a slovenly scribbler? Not one of his characteristics gives him the right to be a representative of the New France even at Trieste. He writes absurd paradoxical books . . ."

"Which nobody reads," added d'Argout.

"Who is going to read such nonsense?" asked Barrot angrily. "Either it is a real call for revolution to those on whom we put a timely check, or it is simply a slander on human nature. Have you read his new novel in the *Journal Littéraire*?"

"I don't read the *Journal Littéraire*," said Molé.

"Gentlemen, cease talking about trifles," said Laffitte bluntly. "Let's talk about electoral reform. Neither I nor Monsieur Guizot consider the situation to be so stable as to allow one to be unconcerned about the next elections. The question must be thoroughly investigated."

Judith Gauthier walked along the avenues of Versailles, poking the point of her lace sunshade into the sand of the path, which was still wet from the rain. The avenues were deserted. The clipped trees were turning yellow, the fountains tossed their sprays mournfully towards the autumnal sky, and only the roses glowed brightly in the verdure of the fading flower-beds.

"I had no idea there were so many poor people in Paris," she said to Beyle.

"And I had no idea there were so many heroes," he replied.

They had come to the end of their two-hour walk. It was a farewell walk which they had purposely not taken in Paris; the avenues of Versailles were empty and complete stillness reigned in the fading gardens. The carriage was waiting at the gates. For the first few minutes they drove without speaking. Then they began to talk once more.

"What will you do at Trieste?"

"Listen to music," said Beyle. "I love most of all Mozart, Cimarosa and Rossini."

"Yes, that is right," said Madame Gauthier. "You like crystal-clear sentiment, you like clear ideas, you are bound to like the transparent and sunny music of those three composers."

"To-day you are like a botanist defining the different kinds of mushrooms," said Beyle. "If you wish me to be quite frank, I must tell you that at the base of my convictions lie five or six indisputably logical affirmations, and as for the rest . . . my only certainty is in my feelings."

"That is understandable to me, but you would be too big a plant for my herbarium, if I were a botanist. Tell me, why does everybody regard you as a supporter of the aristocracy?"

"There are no grounds whatever for it," replied Beyle. "I remember young de Tracy was delighted at the death of Napoleon. He said: 'A bourgeois always comes to a bad end if he becomes a monarch.' I remember that in 1815

the whole aristocracy denied that there was any courage in the character of *Nicholas Buonaparte*. That was what they called the late Emperor in those days, and I loved him precisely because the aristocracy hated him. I regarded truth as the queen of the world I was about to enter, and in those days I regarded only priests as hostile to her. That is what always happens when 'twice two are four' stands in the way of any profit. In order not to be a bourgeois, I am willing to have the reputation of being an aristocrat. I am willing in general to have any reputation, provided I am not hindered from writing and listening to music, travelling and making love."

"You have not forgotten that?" remarked Madame Gauthier.

"It is what I remember least of all," said Beyle. "Too many separations in life make it sad. I only want to tell you that I am delighted to leave Paris. It won't be long before the bourgeoisie needs the Jesuits the same as the aristocracy needed them. Young men in cassocks, carving out a career for themselves in the Church, informing and spying on one another, jealous and base-minded, will reproduce Tartufes of the bourgeois brand. Monsieur de La Fayette has been shouting about equality. What sort of equality is this—equality in robbing, the equality of a pack of wolves, the solidarity of plunderers, who kill off the accidentally weakened wolf. But a little while and the directors of the Ministries will get their teeth into one another under the black cloak of the Bourse. That is equality! I saw Monsieur de La Fayette in the July days. He was in a torn shirt addressing a group of intriguers. He very coldly interrupted his speech when he saw me enter and talk to his secretary, Lavasseur. I do not resent the fact that he did not want to go on with his speech in my presence: if the July days were the hot sun of Paris, it is useless to take offence at the grey cloud obscuring it. Personally, having been accustomed to Napoleon, Lord Byron and, I may add, to Lord Brougham, Monti, Canova, Rossetti and my exiled Italian friends, I recognize the greatness of Monsieur de La Fayette and leave it at that. Of course, I respect Paris; with its wit and its cuisine it is the first city in the world, but it has ceased to captivate me. I seek and perhaps will find the fundamental traits of such a human character as will help to create the future. Where, in what milieu is it to be found, in what social group do the precious inner traits of the human character develop most of all? In Paris a big explosion has occurred which bears witness to the complete decline of energy; the results of the July days are insignificant, if, of course, one does not appreciate them from the point of view of personal success. I am sure that if Mérimée returns he will find a patron in d'Argout. He is a friend of his. Mérimée will say that the revolution took place for his benefit. D'Argout will poke his nose into all the Ministries, because his nose is too big. Mérimée will saddle the nose and ride from chancellery to chancellery."

Judith Gauthier looked at Beyle. He had suddenly become good-natured and tranquil. Only his eyes gleamed merrily and a trifle maliciously as before. Everything spoke of the man's extraordinary fullness of perception.

"Good-bye, dear friend," said Madame Gauthier. "*Bon voyage!*"

"She halted, then glancing at Beyle, she continued: "You are smiling, but I don't know why there is a smile in your eyes. Is this your world or not? Are you a stranger to us inhabitants of this planet? Who are you?"

"I signed my letters to you 'Dimanche.' In Milan they called me Dominique. That is what I call myself. 'Domenica' in Italian means Sunday and 'domani' to-morrow. I am the seventh day of the week, I am the day of rest, I am the to-morrow of humanity, but to-day I am the French Consul at Trieste."

On 6th November Beyle set out from Paris by the familiar Lyons highway. Meanwhile Thiers, having poured out his bile in connection with Guizot's appointment, was talking with his engineer friends about an English and American novelty: a boiler on wheels that drew open carriages and coaches along parallel lines.

"It is a nonsensical toy!" shouted Thiers. "Let the English cranks amuse themselves with it! It is romanticism, and from romanticism to the Commune it is but a step. The Ministry of France will not dare give any money for such nonsense! No railroads!"

Letters from Messieurs *Méquillet, Poverino, Champagne, Ailhaud, Meynier, Dupellée*, and finally letters without any signature at all, poured into Paris. They were all written in the same handwriting to various persons; all spoke of the extraordinary boredom of Trieste. The people who received these letters met one another in Paris and said: "The Consul is bored."

Beyle in fur boots and a warm hat sat in a room in an hotel at Trieste and suffered from rheumatic pains. The winter journey had been an uncomfortable one. In Trieste there were no fireplaces and the wind howled in the unheated rooms. As a Frenchman of importance Beyle was treated with every mark of respect. The hotel proprietor brushed the dust with his hat when he met him, but served the game underdone, the rice not properly cooked and the wine when it was turning sour. Worst of all there was something uncertain about Beyle's position. Through all the outer show of respect, the behaviour towards him bordered on insolence that was not afraid of rebuke. Beyle went to Banat, inspected the French ships at Fiume, visited the Turkish coffee-houses and admired the Adriatic coast. Austrian officers in cloaks walking along the shore looked at him haughtily. At home he did not notice that somebody was rummaging in the drawers of his table, but whenever he went away he always locked up his room and took the key with him. One day he noticed a heap of cigar ash on the floor near his writing-table. The servant and the hotel proprietor assured him in the most flattering terms that he had imagined it, that such a thing was impossible. His short walks to the sea and back became less and less frequent. A strong, keen wind was blowing—the *bora*—which made it impossible for him to walk in the streets. In such weather ship's cables were stretched from house to house for the pedestrians to cling on to. One day, having forgotten this precaution, Beyle was caught up at the cross-roads by a mighty gust of wind and hurled headlong to the pavement. The weather was as disgusting as the people; the Austrian gendarmerie as insolent as the weather. In one week thirty men's lives and careers were ruined owing to the Austrian gendarmes. Brought from Venice, they were escorted through the streets of Trieste and taken to the Moravian prisons. Silvio Pellico, however, was already at liberty. Fresh winds were blowing in Europe after the July barricades. They were tearing the prison doors off their hinges, and perhaps it was only because of the blood shed in Paris that Beyle was able, after passing through Milan which had once been barred to him, to walk peacefully along the pavement in Trieste. It was a broad pavement. The stone flags, two yards long, were swept clean by the rain, but the December sun shone weakly.

So far Beyle had been unable to settle his relations with the Austrian authorities. Anyway, it was a strange position in which he found himself. He wrote to Mareste:

I have tried not to utter a single pleasantry since my arrival in this peninsula. I have not said anything that aims at being amusing. I have not



seen any man's sister. In short, I have been moderate and prudent, and I am bored to death.

The apartments cost me six francs two sous. Being like a bird on a branch (Clara does not understand this light metaphor) prevents me from hiring a cook. I am poisoned to such an extent that I have recourse to boiled eggs. I discovered this resource a week ago and I am very proud of it.

Knowing that Madame Azur, Alberthe de Rubempré, had captured Mareste, Beyle sent his regards to her through him and also wrote to her :

Two months ago the woman who is the most esteemed here (ugly, thirty-three, an income of thirty-five thousand francs, excellent cuisine, admirable furniture), having heard speak of my excellency, invited me to dinner. She had with her Count Mocenigo, an ex-ambassador. When I entered, she said to me : "We are going to have a good talk at dinner . . ." I was preparing my most piquant phrases, when my Russian colleague arrived, deaf as a post, but with a cross round his neck. She called him and put him on her left. Nobody found anything extraordinary in that. A man is nothing by himself; he must have a mark of the special patronage of his Court, a privilege.

On 1st January, 1831, Beyle wrote to Virginie Ancelot :

Alas, Madame, I am dying of boredom and the cold. That is all the news I can give to-day, 1st January, 1831. I don't know if I shall stay here. I read only the *Quotidienne* and the *Gazette de France*. This regime makes me thin. To keep up my dignity and not to go astray, as happened in Paris, I do not allow myself the smallest pleasantry. I am as moral and truthful as *Télémaque*. So I am respected. Grand Dieu ! what a dull world, and how worthy of all the ennui it feels and exudes !

I am very near to barbarity here. I have rented a small country house which has six rooms, the whole six no bigger than your bedroom. This resemblance is the only pleasant thing about them. There I live among peasants whose only religion is that of money. All that is done in France for the sake of vanity is done here for the sake of money. The greatest beauties adore me for the price of a sequin (eleven francs sixty-three centimes). Diable ! this refers to the peasants and not to good society. I put this in out of respect for the truth and for the friends who will open my letter.

If you have the kindness to write to me, send the long letter (please let it be as long as my merit) to number 35, rue Godot de Mauroy, to M. R. Colomb, ancien directeur de contributions. In the next house there is a Vicomte Colomb, who opens my relation's letters, when the number 35 is not so big as this. I am ignorant of everything in this enchanted spot. You will realize the extent of my apathy when I confess to you that I read the advertisements in the *Quotidienne*. If ever I meet the editors in the streets of Paris, I shall certainly strangle them. Ask gloomy and profound Mérimée for the explanation of this vindictive sentiment, which your dove-like heart would never understand.

It was only a week ago that I heard of the publication of *Le Rouge et le Noir*. Tell me frankly all the worst that you think of this flat work, which does not conform to the academic rules and, in spite of that, is perhaps

boring. Write to me once a month. What style shall I use in order to convey to you the thoughts which I devote to you? How does a poor devil dying of thirst in the deserts beyond Algiers describe to himself a glass of water?—I conclude with this limpid idea.

My respects or friendly greetings, according to the dignity of the personage, to each of your kind friends. For instance, give my respects to Madame la Baronne du Mercredi, and to all that is dear to her. Write me the secret history of M. Clara Gazul and M. de (Mareste).

Graciously accept the homage of an exile.

CHAMPAGNE.

Beyle once wrote in his diary: "I saw Odilon Barrot for the first time in the Chamber of Peers, where they were dealing with the affair of the conspiracy of 29th August. He was a little man with a blue beard. He was defending one of the conspirators, proving that he had neither the intelligence nor the courage to carry out the design that was attributed to him."

On 19th November, 1830, Alexander Ivanovich Turgenev wrote in his diary: "The opening of the 'Commercial Athenæum' took place at No. 4, rue du Cloître. Marchand, the Maire of the 7th Arrondissement, and the teaching staff awaited the Prefect of the Département de la Seine, Odilon Barrot, who arrived and paid tribute to 'his glorious revolution and to *his merchant class*—the salt of the earth—which had assumed power. Odilon Barrot spoke a few strong words of greeting to the orator-professor and the merchant founders of the 'Athenæum' and said that the merchants were the first class in the State, that the French had risen in the estimation of foreigners, that the nation was being praised on all sides, and that the number of persons desiring to assume French nationality and to take root here was increasing to an extraordinary extent."

Concluding his diary, A. I. Turgenev wrote: "This book was begun at Brighton on 12th November, 1828, that is, two years, one month and twenty days ago. *It is the black period and the continuation of the black time of my life.* It gives little indication of what took place in the depth of my soul; this is so rarely expressed; one only tells of the bare happenings."

Beyle wrote in his letters and diary under the letters T.t.T. (Trieste, toujours Trieste): "Dominique has no information regarding his forthcoming appointment. I observe the peculiarities of human nature. I am interested in facts, which have no other value than genuineness. They are not piquant from the Parisian point of view, but they are interesting in every place when men are concerned with essentials, when they are more interested in events than in gossip about their neighbour."

In February Beyle wrote to Mareste in Paris: "Dominique writes to me that he is not at all sure of the route which he must take: all roads lead to Rome—but what about the brigands, sir? They are capable of springing on to his neck and saying: 'We love you.'"

With these jests Beyle escaped from his sudden anxiety. He went to Venice and had a meeting with his old friend Buratti. "He could not refuse me this." He wrote in his diary: "March, 1831. Almost every evening at nine o'clock I went for a walk with Buratti, for whom I had a tender affection. After midnight we had supper and passed the time talking till four o'clock in the morning. I told him that Pellico had said to Byron: 'Buratti goes to prison twice a year on account of his verses, copies of which are passed from hand to hand. If

he had printed them, the Austrian gendarmerie would have made certain of imprisoning him for life.'"

In the sailing vessel in which Beyle went from Venice to Trieste was a nimble young man with light blue eyes and a pleasant smile. At Trieste he accompanied Beyle to his house, smiling all the time at him as though he were an old acquaintance. Beyle had an uncomfortable feeling under the restless, caressing gaze of the youth, who was evidently a pupil of some clerical academy. On arriving home, he found a whole pile of letters. It was the same thing again. Readers of *Le Rouge et le Noir* asked him what he meant to say with his Julien Sorel and they themselves answered for the author: "He simply wanted to portray himself." Beyle replied only to the last letter of Alberthe de Rubempré, who was now Madame de Mareste:

Three days ago I received a letter similar to yours only worse; if Julien is a rascal, then he must be a portrait of me; it could not be otherwise. In the days of the Emperor, Julien would have been a very honest man; I lived in the days of the Emperor; hence . . . But what does it matter? If I were a handsome fair-haired young man with that melancholy air promising pleasures *à la mode*, my other lady friend would not have judged me to be such a rascal.

If I were Julien, I would have paid four visits a month to the "Globe," or I would have gone to M. le Marquis de Pastoret. . . .

Beyle laid the letter aside, having decided to finish it another time, as a courier tapped on the door and handed him a large packet bearing the blue diplomatic seal of the French Ambassador in Vienna. Having read the letter, Beyle stood a long while with his forehead pressed against the cold window-pane. Then he nerved himself, took a fresh sheet of paper and began to write:

To Baron de Mareste, Paris.

I have just received a letter from M. le Marquis de Maison, the Ambassador in Vienna, who tells me that M. de Metternich has refused the exequatur and has ordered the Austrian Ambassador to Paris to protest against my nomination. The first idea suggested by my misanthropy was to write to nobody. Nevertheless, I am writing to the friends who have really served me, *facta loquantur*. I am writing to Madame de Tracy; Monsieur de Tracy, formerly aide-de-camp to Count Sebastiani, and always my friend, he may be useful to me. I am asking Madame Victor, to whom you know how much I owe, to *decide* for me.

*Que George vive ici puisque George y sait vivre !*

M. le Comte d'Argout was my friend for ten years; but one day I said that the hereditary principle of the peerage made the eldest sons stupid. What do you think of such a blunder?

I specify nothing. I feel more and more that heat is for me, with my seven and forty years of age, an element of health and good humour. Therefore, consul at Palermo, Naples or even Cadiz; but in God's name not the North! I enter into no details with Madame de Tracy, begging her to *decide*. She will tell me in the end what to hope for and what to fear.

Forty-seven years of age, a few books, the strange semi-success of his last book, praises that give no pleasure and reproaches that, like the praises, miss the mark, rheumatism, the weariness of struggling and, the main thing, all this without that lyrical flame and splendour which accompanied Byron's short

life, and without the wise contemplative peace in which Helvétius passed his days. Austria was true to herself. She well knew how to set traps for every free mind. In the whole of Europe all that remained to Byron was Genoa, a narrow strip of land, from which it was easy to step on board a ship. Was he too, Stendhal, doomed to a strip of land seven kilometres in length and to the disgusting service of the banking house "Orleans, Laffitte & Périet"?

Night came. He could not sleep. Round patches of moonlight shone on the floor. In the midst of the profound stillness there was a sudden rustling: mice were dancing round and round in the patch of moonlight, squealing, tapping and prancing as though performing some kind of weird ceremony. Beyle was delighted with the spectacle. It made him forget for a while the restless, wearisome state of his mind in the evening hours. In this kingdom of tiny creatures, in their weird ritualistic movement in the moonlight, there was something so human, so comical in its seriousness, that he could not help laughing. An old mouse bolted into a crevice. Thereupon the whole lot of them scattered in all directions. "I have nothing left but to take up such an amusement in my old age," thought Beyle. "But Mérimée, who is twenty-seven, does not give up his white mice."

He was furious in the morning when he replied to a letter of Mareste, who was still unaware of his misfortunes and scolded him for not knowing how to take advantage of the favourable political moment and adapt himself to the new circumstances, as the Minister Molé had done.

Beyle wrote:

Dear Mareste,

The analogy with my respected chief M. seems to me to be rather stupid. Analogy, yes, if Delacroix, Clara, you, I, the great Frederic, played at hide-and-seek in the Bois de Boulogne in 1820; if, ten years later, in June 1831 we play the same game, in the same place, use the same tricks to hide ourselves and the same finesse to discover the hiding-place of the others. To what does it all lead? To the fact that *our characters have not changed*.

The aristocracy is without energy, without fidelity to its word, full of falsehood which it calls finesse, as in 1791. Your brother is like Louis XVI. Alas! except our friends, the Ministers are weak; they hate truth and energy.

How can you expect the two hundred thousand Julien Sorels who people France, and who have the example of the advancement of the drummer Duc de Bellune, of sous-officier Augereau, of all the Prosecutors' clerks who became senators and counts of the Empire, not to want to overthrow the above-mentioned stupid people? The *doctrinaires* have not the *virtue* of the Girondists. The Julien Sorels have read M. de Tracy's book on Montesquieu: these are two great differences. Perhaps the terror will not be so bloody; but remember the 3rd September; the people, in marching against the enemy, did not want to leave priests *in their rear* to kill their wives. That is a stroke of terror which is to be feared the day after the commencement of war.

Prince Metternich, or the Duke of Pontella, in a star-spangled uniform, sat at his writing-table jotting down a fresh chapter of his autobiography. Pouring out the venom of his indignation and contempt on his collaborators and contemporaries, he called himself the vice-regent of God on earth, the torch

illuminating humanity, the tremendous moral force that would leave behind it a void incapable of being filled. He wrote enthusiastically about himself as "the man of that which was." He identified revolution with an infectious disease. He said that tranquillity and immobility were the only basis of order, and that States could not remain isolated for they were bound to uphold by their united forces the unity and inviolability of the monarchical principle. He wrote that the Austrian Hapsburgs, who had not only temporal but also ecclesiastical authority, were the only ones who stood on guard in defence of the principle of pure and absolute monarchy.

While the Duke of Pontella was writing, two hairdressers curled his hair and powdered his cheeks so deftly and quickly that the very busy man was able to write without distracting his attention. But that day his attention was distracted by a blue Italian packet. He interrupted his writing to open it. Inside were the papers relating to the long-drawn-out affair of the destruction by artillery of a couple of houses in the town of Modena and the capture of the conspirator Ciro Menotti. It was an unpleasant affair. Then there was a very old Italian dossier with a new supplement and copies of the Spielberg protocols. On top lay an accompanying document written on an official form of the Prefect of the Police of the capital, Count Sedlnitzky:

Absolutely secret. To His Excellency the Chancellor of State, Prince Metternich.

Vienna, 30th November, 1830.

Your Excellency will gather from the report of the Chief of the Milan Police, Baron Torresani, of 22nd and 23rd of this month, that the Frenchman, Henri Beyle, who was expelled from Milan and the possessions of His Apostolic Majesty the Emperor of Austria in 1828, as the author of revolutionary pamphlets hiding under the pseudonym of Baron Stendhal, insolent works directed mainly against Austria, recently turned up again in Milan on his way to Trieste, whither he is going in order to take up the post of Consul General. He has been given this appointment by the present French Government, and notwithstanding the fact that his passport was not presented for a visa at the Imperial and Royal Consulate in Paris the above-mentioned Beyle continued his journey to Trieste with the permission of the Governor of Lombardy.

In order to describe in brief the degree of hatred with which this Frenchman is animated in regard to the Government of Austria and to give some idea of the dangerous character of his political principles, which are incompatible with the spirit of our policy, diplomacy and system of government, I will permit myself to place before Your Excellency the originals of the secret reports on the three works of the above-mentioned Frenchman: *Histoire de la Peinture en Italie*, Paris, 1818, Didot; *Rome, Naples et Florence*, Paris, 1818, Delaunay; and *Promenades dans Rome*, Paris, 1829.

I presume that Your Excellency would rather not have any post of French Consul at all, either at Trieste or anywhere else, if the French Government insists that this post should be given to such a doubly suspect person as Henri Beyle. In venturing to ask for Your Excellency's instructions, I await the decision of Your Excellency as to whether this Frenchman, who was once expelled for ever from the confines of the Austrian State, should remain at Trieste while awaiting the settlement of his affair, and in the event of the reply being in the negative, will Your Excellency please

instruct me to take the necessary measures against the above-mentioned Frenchman. . . .

Metternich reflected. Had he not warned that old blockhead Charles X not to jolt his rotten France too much. Charles had refused to listen either to him, Metternich, or to the Tsar of Russia. From Metternich's point of view, France should be allowed to rot peacefully. It did not seem to him to be a healthy State. A State affected by revolution to such an extent was unable in the opinion of the Chancellor of Austria to regain its political health quickly. Perhaps for Austria it was even better so. The important thing was that France should not become the centre of a new infection. Metternich went over to a cupboard and took out a book of 1828, *The Conspiracy of Equals*, of Buonarrotti—the story of the first French Communist, Gracchus Babeuf. "The country that publishes such books with impunity is a centre of world revolution," thought Metternich. Buonarrotti, the same man who as a boy was discovered on 10th May, 1796, at Babeuf's place printing the forty-fourth number of the Communist newspaper *La Tribune du Peuple*, was alive and well. His disciple and friend was the Saint-Simonist Bazard, his disciple and friend was the Frenchman Andrian, a Carbonaro, who was imprisoned at Spielberg together with the most dangerous Milanese Confalonieri and his group. Metternich had an excellent memory. He suddenly remembered that the most dangerous at the time was an engineer from Novara, Domenico Vismara, who stirred up a revolt in Turin. Vismara had not been found. Metternich sat down and drew the chair up to the table. He read one document after the other. Domenico Vismara, Alceste, Torricelli, the brothers Robert, Henri, Dupuy, Clapier et Compagnie, Laubry, Auguste, Blaise Durand, Poverino, Baron Stendhal and finally Henri Beyle—all turned out to be the same person. Turning the pages over, Metternich saw his own resolution. Domenico Vismara was sentenced to be hanged. Henri Beyle had been expelled from Milan at twenty-four hours' notice in 1821. Then there were three further expulsions. Now it was understandable why Vismara had not been hanged. It had been established that the engineer Domenico Vismara, the writer Stendhal and the French Consul Beyle were identical. The gallows was impossible, especially after the July barricades, but Beyle would not get any post in any town. Metternich pulled the bell-rope. The officer on duty came in. The Prefect of Police was sent for. An hour later a special courier was dispatched by order of His Excellency from Vienna to Paris, and ten days later the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs announced that it was willing to recall citizen Beyle and to appoint citizen Levasseur in his place, but categorically demanded that, until the arrival of the new French Consul, Beyle should remain the guardian of French citizens on the coast of the Adriatic Sea. Metternich decided not to answer, but at the same time he did not insist on the immediate expulsion of Beyle. He set a watch on him and was absolutely furious when he learnt of Beyle's meeting with Buratti. His fury was doubled when the secret agent reported to him that the newly appointed Consul Levasseur was none other than the secretary of the commander of the French National Guards La Fayette, and had been wounded at the July barricades. He sent for the French Ambassador de Maison and said to him: "This is too much! We are getting well rid of Beyle, and you foist on to us La Fayette's secretary!" De Maison had instructions not to yield. Metternich knew that since the July revolution all was not well in the Austrian possessions, and for this reason, when de Maison replied to him resentfully: "Ah, my

dear Prince, revolutions do not produce legitimists except after a very long accouchement," Metternich merely shrugged his shoulders.

Beyle wrote to Mareste: "I await my successor with the liveliest impatience. I hope to spend the spring in my new residence. But shall I go by way of Genoa, where I would take ship, or simply by way of Venice, Ferrara, Bologna?"

"I am being sent to Civita Vecchia," he added in a note to Alberthe de Rubempré. "But how am I to go there? The insurgents have cut the roads to Spoleto and Perugia. Around the armies of the two parties there are bands of robbers who hold the country parts. I shall probably go by way of Genoa and embark there for Rome. To the devil with the insurgents!—Forget your anger; in six months' time nobody will talk about *Le Rouge et le Noir*, and I will make a confession to you: I have never been to Russia; it was my brother Henri-Marc, whose papers I took. This was possible because I am called Marie-Henri, the same initials."

When Beyle wrote this, he was in a good humour. Before him lay an official communication from Sebastiani, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, who signed the papers in consequence of the resignation of Molé:

"Monsieur, I have the honour to inform you that the King has decided that it would be useful to his service to appoint you Consul of France at Civita Vecchia, and that H.M. by the same order, dated the 5th of this month, has nominated as your successor M. Levasseur, who will shortly leave for Trieste. Nevertheless, you will be so good, Monsieur, as not to quit your post before the arrival of your successor and not to leave without handing over to him in the regular manner the papers of the chancellery of the Consulate. At the same time I inform you, Monsieur, that I am going to send your 'brevet' to the King's Ambassador in Rome with the request to forward it to you direct at Civita Vecchia, as soon as, by his solicitations, it has been invested with the exequatur of the Papal Government. His Majesty has no doubt of the zeal, etc."

## CHAPTER FORTY-THREE

FROM NORTH TO SOUTH OF THE APENNINE PENINSULA THE SAME POLICY, WHICH aimed at turning Italy into a mere "geographical term" and made it impossible for people speaking the same language not only to unite on the basis of common aspirations but even to visit one another freely, had been imposed on the Italian people since the time of the Congress of Vienna by the alliance of the monarchs of Europe. Since the revolutionary disturbances of 1821 this policy had been maintained by Austria as the centre of absolutism and by Rome as the centre of religious oppression. This policy could only be carried out owing to the extreme dismemberment of the country. The North and the South were divided up in a score of "independent" states, each of which was bound faithfully to observe the laws, manners and customs of the pre-revolutionary monarchy. The central part of Italy together with Rome was a sort of ecclesiastical monarchy with the Pope of Rome as the secular sovereign. It was forbidden to import books into Italy. Everybody who read a newspaper, everybody in general who read a good deal was registered. Secular schools were almost completely non-existent, the population was illiterate and owing to its ignorance exceedingly religious. The North and the South could not unite until the whole mass of the population became hostile to religion. Metternich thought that peace would reign here eternally. But the people of Italy thought otherwise. The

heavier the yoke, the stronger was the aspiration to liberty. When Beyle arrived at Civita Vecchia, he saw there a vast prison, in which a thousand prisoners working in the galleys spent the night. "The political criminals were already different: it was not poets, savants and aristocrats, like Silvio Pellico or Confalonieri, who were sent to forced labour—no, the most dangerous political leaders now turned out to be a carpenter and a cobbler. Neither the one nor the other was mentioned by name, as their names were carefully concealed."

Levasseur, on arriving at Trieste, took over from Beyle. He had supposed that he would find at the Consulate a man crushed by failure, a slovenly writer who had been unable to cope with affairs and unable to stand up to Austrian pressure. What was his surprise when he saw a sun-burnt man with dark-chestnut, almost black side-whiskers, a thick nose and keen, intelligent, almost malicious eyes! Beyle went out to him in a leisurely way, in his Consul's uniform with the high collar, calmly and politely offered him his hand and led him into his study. Levasseur was astonished: for two hours Beyle taught him, like a pupil, the consular business. He gave an account of the French population of the peninsula and the mutual relations of the French citizens with the local population, gave him the lists of all the ships in the port, and imparted to him information regarding the corn trade of Banat and the goods required by France. Gazing drily at Levasseur, he told him from memory the tariffs of the consular and custom-office taxes, so that in the end Levasseur, who had expected to find a frivolous gossip, was quite taken aback and wearied by his intense business-like manner. At the same time Levasseur could not help feeling grateful to the man, who handed him the keys of all the consular secrets of Trieste. After their business conversation Beyle took him to dinner. Levasseur could not restrain himself from expressing his feelings. Annoyed at his surprise, Beyle said to him: "Monsieur, I was a pupil of the Polytechnic named after the mathematician Euler, I was inspector of the crown property of the Emperor Napoleon, I was an *auditeur* of the Council of State, who calculated at night during the Moscow campaign the figures of the artillery and provision supplies of the Grande Armée, and I do not consider consular affairs to be more difficult than my previous occupations. Be so good as to take your place at the table."

Levasseur showered praises on the Polytechnic, which had played such a brilliant role in the July days.

"Be moderate in your praises," said Beyle. "Don't forget that you were previously the secretary of Monsieur de La Fayette. The Polytechnic poisoned the enthusiasm of the National Guards for that General. The Polytechnic is composed of Republicans."

"I hope you are not a Republican?" said Levasseur.

"Oh no, of course not," replied Beyle. "I merely do not want you to praise what is dangerous for you."

"Do you know, Monsieur Beyle, that the recently elected Chamber raised the question of abolishing the post of supreme commander of the National Guards without regard to the fact that the supreme commander, La Fayette, would be very much offended?"

On hearing this news, Beyle raised his eyebrows but said nothing.

"The General, of course, immediately retired from all affairs."

Beyle suddenly felt that he was choking with laughter: "What, that enthusiastic old Polichinelle, who is turning the serious business of revolution into a farce and tried to play the role of a humane Robespierre, a modest Danton and a tactful Marat, has received his due at last? Laffitte and Casimir Périer



have turned him into the Moor of Genoa, the henchman of Fiesco. 'The Moor has done his job, the Moor can depart !' That is their intrigue ! That is what they have done ! O the crafty ones, O the cunning wolves !'

Handing a glass of red wine to Levasseur, Beyle proposed a toast to the health of His Majesty the King of France.

Levasseur had intended to send a shattering report on his predecessor to France, but the affairs of the consulate were in a brilliant condition and all that was left for him to do was to keep silence altogether. He could not blame ; he did not want to praise. He could appropriate Beyle's extensive preparatory work without saying anything.

On the way to Civita Vecchia Beyle was delayed in Florence. There he encountered the artist Horace Vernet and spent several days with him and his wife and daughter, till the promised letter arrived with money and the travel documents. Horace Vernet was descended from a line of painters : his grandfather and great-grandfather were artists, his father was a famous painter of battle scenes, who painted huge canvases representing the battles of Napoleon. Horace Vernet had studied under his father and the artist Vincent. He belonged to the new generation. He was an opponent of the classic traditions and in 1809 painted the "Capture of the Redoubt," which treated the battle in the same manner as Mérimée in his short story of the same name. Since 1828 Horace Vernet had been director of the French Academy in Rome.

At dinner Vernet showed Beyle some little sketches of Italian types. They were energetic, handsome faces, not devoid of cunning and good nature, splendid examples of a magnificent human breed, wonderful material for the creation of an invincible cohort.

"But alas !" said Vernet, "these twenty-seven handsome Tuscan heads are all bandits of a gang that were captured a month ago. I am painting a picture called 'The capture of the bandits by the papal gendarmes.' Do you know who was their leader ? This one." Vernet handed Beyle a pencil drawing representing a profile of unusual purity. It was a perfectly Raphaellesque head of a youth of nineteen. Curly hair, a magnificently outlined noble mouth and a beautifully shaped head.

"What men !" exclaimed Beyle.

"Yes," replied Vernet. "The vast energy of twenty-seven lives will be spent in the galleys, and the leader will probably be hanged. All his crime consisted in his having struck the papal censor with a knife. The gendarme dragged his hand away. The wound turned out to be a mere scratch. The youth was corresponding with a woman on whom the papal official had made an attempt. The gendarmes intercepted the correspondence and used it in such a way that they nearly drove the youth out of his mind. Hence the blow with a knife, then flight, then the bandit gang on the roads from Siena to Florence, and finally the unhappy ending. All the twenty-seven were in prison. There was a twenty-eighth, but he disappeared. He was to have been bribed by the Cardinal Governor to betray the gang, but instead of getting the money that had been promised to him, he got the noose in Rome. They are not at all Parisian impressions, are they ?" said Vernet, concluding his story.

"Fortunately not," said Beyle. "But the energy of these young men will not always be spent on banditry and the galleys."

"It is perhaps a good thing that I began my diplomatic career at Trieste and not immediately at Civita Vecchia," thought Beyle. "It is a good thing

that Sainte-Beuve did not come to share my solitude at Trieste for half a year, as I invited him, and it is a good thing that now I know how they take the three colours of the France of to-day. Baron Devaux, the French Consul at Civita Vecchia, who had occupied that post for sixteen years, was deprived of it in a few hours merely because after the July days he took it into his head immediately to hoist the tricolour French flag on the façade of the French Consulate. It was a perfectly legitimate act, but not everything legitimate is good. In hoisting the tricolour flag, Devaux removed from the façade the papal arms with the crossed keys. The little old fellow, Cardinal Galeffi, the Governor of Civita Vecchia, was inexorable. After the Cardinal had reported to the papal chancellery, no power on earth could save Devaux. So the old Consul is obliged to hand over his authority to some good-for-nothing Paris scribbler, who, moreover, has been expelled from Trieste by Monsieur Metternich."

The Consul's assistant, a lean, dark-haired Greek named Lysimaque Tavernier, regretfully took leave of his master.

"I do not congratulate you, Tavernier. I cannot wait any longer. Monsieur Beyle, my successor, should have arrived a week ago ; there you have the first indication of the new Consul's punctuality. I am going to Rome for the day."

"I have decided to accompany you," said Lysimaque.

In the return coach from Rome three Romans and an Englishman travelled with Tavernier, and just before the coach left for Orvieto a stout Italian jumped in. He wanted to take the seat by the window. Lysimaque, who from that day considered himself to be the factual representative of the kingdom of France in the territory of Civita Vecchia, decided to sit by the window himself and refused to budge. The Italian looked at him with amazement, moved away and said to him: "*Scusi*."

"I presume that an Italian merchant should give way to the French Consul," said Lysimaque, rudely addressing the man who had offered his excuses.

"And I presume," replied the latter, "that if you are an Italian merchant, I am the French Consul at Civita Vecchia."

Lysimaque jumped up like a scalded man.

"Monsieur Beyle ? !"

"Yes," replied Beyle.

"I have the honour to introduce myself: the vice-consul Lysimaque Tavernier."

Thus the unofficial introduction was made.

Devaux, on leaving, said querulously to Beyle: "I advise you to get rid of Lysimaque. He is a crafty fellow and a hypocrite, modest in appearance but with a terrible self-conceit."

"But he doesn't steal ?" said Beyle.

"I haven't noticed," replied Devaux weakly.

When the dust from the coach settled on the road, Beyle in his blue uniform with eighteen rows of gold braid and a three-cornered hat with white plumes, having put on his gloves and sword, entered the house of Cardinal Galeffi. A little old man with a hooked nose covered with blue veins, with small humid, faded eyes, in a red frock-coat and a red satin waistcoat, rose to meet him, leaning with his left hand on a stick, against which rattled big cornelian rosary beads.

"Yes, yes, Civita Vecchia is farther from Vienna than Trieste. But we are not so strict as the Chancellor of Austria. It is a pity, of course, that the French

Consul here gets not fifteen but only eleven thousand francs from his Government, but we think that trade will revive and your affairs will improve."

His tone was quite amiable and benevolent, and one would hardly have thought that this sclerotic little old man was a Cardinal. Beyle looked at his red waistcoat and tried to remember where he had seen one exactly like it. This insistent thought helped him to preserve a respectful and concentrated expression during his talk with the Cardinal and not to let himself become involved in argument.

"Ah yes, Théophile Gautier had a waistcoat like that at the performance of *Hernani* and it horrified the honest bourgeois. I even told him he was distracting the attention of the public who did not know whether to look at his waistcoat or the stage."

The Cardinal led Beyle on to a balcony overlooking the sea.

He could see the spacious blue bay and the ships in the roadway: huge sailing vessels, a papal ship and the French brig *Alerte*.

"You see that I am not in the least opposed to the French flag," said Cardinal Galeffi and, taking a white handkerchief from his pocket, he waved it from the balcony. A puff of white smoke appeared on a ship and three seconds later came the sound of a shot. The French flag was hoisted on the mast of the brig, and on the papal ship a huge white standard with Peter and Paul soared aloft, fluttering in the breeze. This was the greeting of the papal ship, a salute on the occasion of the new Consul's taking up his office.

A day later there was a local festival. The income from *Le Rouge et le Noir* was dwindling rapidly. Beyle's first task was to decorate the Consulate with torches at night without waiting for the consulate funds to arrive. In the morning a dumbfounded Lysimaque came to Beyle for a heart-to-heart talk. He assured him that he did not demand anything and that he regarded it as an honour to serve with the Consul. He doubted whether he would be able to please him, but he did at any rate know how to be useful to him.

Beyle reassured him. "My friend, I do not think you have any grounds for such a conversation. It has not even entered my head to replace you."

A minute later Beyle had forgotten all about it, but Lysimaque wrote to a relation of his in Paris who was engaged in commerce, asking him to find out some details about his new chief, Monsieur Beyle, to ask the porter and the servant whether Monsieur Beyle had any weaknesses. Having done this, he felt reassured and settled down to bide his time.

Beyle established a rule that between eleven in the morning and one o'clock in the afternoon they were to report and work together, visitors being received twice a week; on the days when French ships arrived they were to make inquiries about the cargoes and inspect the ships' logs; French citizens were to be received at any time. He cautiously questioned Lysimaque about the composition of the population of Civita Vecchia and their inclinations. Lysimaque displayed complete ignorance. That "the population is composed of six thousand four hundred inhabitants mainly of Italian nationality" was something which Beyle knew without consulting his vice-consul.

"What acquaintances did Monsieur Devaux have?" he asked.

"On Sundays he used to visit the local church authorities and nowhere else. Actually there is nothing to find out here," said Lysimaque.

"Nothing!" exclaimed Beyle. "A drive of eight hours in the coach and one is already in Rome. Yet you say there is nothing!"

"But that is Rome," said Tavernier.

"And you think that Civita Vecchia is isolated from the whole world? No, we will re-arrange our work. It is impossible to be satisfied with the society of priests and the captains of the papal gendarmerie. That way you won't find out anything. Be so good as to inform me about everything you see with your own eyes during the day, everything you hear from reliable people, and finally all rumours about what is happening in the neighbouring towns. How many times do the Marseilles steamers call at the port?"

"Four times a month," replied Lysimaque.

"Always have the accounts ready for dispatch to France by the steamers leaving for Marseilles," said Beyle.

"Very good," said Lysimaque, "but I should prefer to confine my work to drawing up the financial reports and dealing with the chancery correspondence." Beyle agreed.

## CHAPTER FORTY-FOUR

THE CONSULAR ESTABLISHMENT WAS NOT VERY LARGE. FIRST OF ALL IT WAS necessary to change the horse. As a former sous-lieutenant in the 6th regiment of Dragoons, Henri Beyle was a connoisseur of horseflesh and with a laugh drove away the dealers who were plainly trying to cheat him. At last a saddle horse was bought. There was a stable in which old carriages stood beside the loose boxes. There was a cellar, in which remained the stock of Orvieto wines purchased from Devaux. Despite the excellent fish caught by the local fishermen, the cuisine was poor. The artichokes were not yet ripe. It was difficult to vary the dishes. Moreover, Doctor Prévost, who examined the future Consul in Paris, said that he must abstain from meat dishes.

From the upper windows of the Consul's house the vast plain of the sea was visible. Civita Vecchia, in spite of its proximity to Rome, seemed to be a detached, isolated corner of the earth. There was no wind, only perpetual quiet and the perfect peace of ancient shores. Red tiled roofs, dusty streets, hot stones, no one about after midday. The inhabitants of this deserted shore remembered nothing of the past. They would only remember the commercial deals of the past five years; not a single citizen would talk about what happened in Florence in 1823 or what happened on the spot of these ancient *centum cellae* in the days of the Romans. It was here, to the north of the town, that a crooked plough brought to light the first vases of the ancient inhabitants—the Etruscans. The calm, languid bourgeoisie of the town was interested neither in books nor in newspapers. There were no schools, no book-shops; the children were taught by the priests. On the days when the harbour was empty the whole coast seemed dead. Only from time to time on these empty days a light brigantine would quiver like a scarcely perceptible white dot on the horizon under the hot rays of the sun. And it was like that until evening. Under cover of darkness it would creep up to the shore and cut into the reddish, rotting seaweed. Men, standing up to their necks in the water, would raise stretchers high above their heads, receive a mysterious load from on board and carry it to the rocky shore. They were gun-running. But nobody knew anything about it. Pope Pius VIII was a timid individual.

"Why aren't the mineral springs of Civita Vecchia exploited? It might attract foreigners and liven up the coast," Beyle asked Galeffi.

"That is just what we do not want," said the Cardinal. "Foreigners will infect our faithful flock with the corrupting spirit of liberalism. In pagan days

these mineral waters healed the Romans of whom you speak, but we a Christians and prefer to be healed with holy water."

"But there is another source of wealth. You can start exporting rotting seaweed for agricultural purposes. It makes the soil fertile."

"We do not want that either," said Galeffi. "Let the peasants live in the mountains; on the coast they become bandits. We find it very expensive as it is to guard the coast."

One evening Beyle went to the local theatre. They were performing *Victims of Love and Friendship*, a play in the style of the English melodrama. The public received it coldly; the husband in the piece was driven out of his mind by his wife's unfaithfulness and the Italians could not understand how this was possible. After the melodrama there was a Punch and Judy show and the public laughed and shouted till the hall shook. This was the old, gay, jesting Italy. Beyle suddenly recognized the eyes of his Lombard friends. But on leaving the theatre those eyes became dull. In the days of Beyle's youth they would light up from other causes. A yoke of nine years' standing had changed and degraded the youth of the Italian cities.

On 6th June Beyle wrote to Mareste: "I am still suffering. Do you know that about the 20th of May the Ambassadors of the five great powers combined to ask the Pope to modify his method of government? For instance: laymen should be eligible to all administrative posts; a Council of State at Rome composed of one third Cardinals and two thirds laymen; abolition of the so-called economic judgments.

"If I only had the power to describe to you the Cardinals and their dialogues! They said they had made up their minds to refuse; but they are hated by their soldiers and their subjects and have no money and no credit.

"You can judge of the moral state of Rome, which is neither here nor there. His Holiness did not dare go to the procession the day before yesterday for fear of being kidnapped by the liberals. He had been warned by an anonymous letter.

"The list of concessions and changes is the talk of the cafés. The trouble is the very worst laymen may be chosen. It was M. de Lutzow, the Austrian Ambassador, who suggested to the Pope that he should resign."

The Papal police, who opened all letters passing in the usual way, had long been alarmed at the fact that a certain Baron Dormant was writing ironical and scathing reports about the most sacred affairs of the Papal government. This time the letter was copied, and conjectures were made as to the identity of its author.

At first Beyle decided to devote himself entirely to diplomatic work. Once he wrote to Mareste that if, in the opinion of the Ministry, a writer could not be a Consul, he was willing not to publish anything. The fact was that he found it difficult to sit down at his writing-table after putting his predecessor's consular affairs in order. They had been very much neglected. Devaux had taken no interest whatever in the French officials in the neighbouring towns of the Papal State. Beyle concerned himself about them. He visited Ravenna, Ancona, Pesaro, Terracina. He would arrive without formality or warning, either on horseback or in a carriage, taking with him his Italian servant, who reminded him of ill-fated Olivieri.

Grave and calm, he would enter the chancelleries of the French representatives without asking permission, examine the consular books, the trade notes, the books of taxes, and ask about the condition of the French citizens and the

state of mind prevailing in the town. His first round of visits did not satisfy him at all. Instead of waking others up, the Frenchmen went to sleep themselves; frightened by the Austrian outcry, they tried to be even lazier than the assistants in the butcher's shop at Civita Vecchia. His eyes flashed when he heard their objections to his demands: he was angry, ruthless and exacting. Three months later there was a change. Reports and information poured into Civita Vecchia. The questionnaires he sent out were filled up. He received information about the state of Italy, if not for France, then for himself. Such was the origin of the sketch *Rome and the Pope*. He sent it to his cousin in Paris at an agreed address in a commercial envelope containing a request for the dispatch of an ice-cream machine. The sketch was published anonymously in an English journal, but it attracted the attention of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs because notices and articles in reply to it appeared in the Austrian and Italian newspapers. The Minister thought the article was excellent, but nobody had any idea that it was written by a French citizen. It was written, in the opinion of the Parisians, by an Englishman, an observer and a constitutionalist, intelligent, cold, recognizing nothing apart from his own London but possessing a vast fund of information about the faults of the Papal and Austrian Governments which were ruining Italy.

A communication came from Paris stating that Lysimaque Tavernier's accounts were not approved.

"I shall have to teach the fool," thought Beyle. "What a bore."

Shutting himself up in his room, he checked up on all the figures. "No, he is not a thief. Only he doesn't know arithmetic," he said with a sigh of relief. "But I am no schoolmaster. I need a good assistant, not a simple fool with ambitious designs!" He was indiscreet enough to make a note of this idea on paper. Then he folded up the accounts and locked them up in his writing-table.

The information on Italy which Beyle sent to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was packed with facts. There were detailed descriptions of the political and economic conditions of Ferrara, Modena and Florence, not to mention Rome in the Papal region. The old Carbonaro displayed all his habits, and in spite of the fact that the vice-consuls of the neighbouring towns were displeased at being roused from their eternal slumbers, his work went with a swing. During the sixteen years Monsieur Devaux was Consul, he was accustomed to send two reports a year. Monsieur Beyle sent reports once every three months and had no scruples about the number of dispatches in code. Indeed these nearly upset the apple-cart. The registrar of the chancellery of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs had tossed the reports of Monsieur Devaux from Civita Vecchia into the waste-paper basket as so much rubbish that nobody needed. He wanted to do the same with Beyle's report. Some overzealous official called Beyle had sent in a memorandum before the appointed time. Obviously he was asking for money or extra leave. But a dispatch arrived with a request for directions. He would have to wade through the nine pages of the memorandum written in close handwriting. That was too much of a good thing! If they started sending in such reports from every town, it would be enough to make one die in the registrar's chair. That was the first cause of indignation.

The indignation spread to the junior secretary, then to the senior secretary and at last to the head of the chancellery. The wave of indignation rolled as far as the Ministerial cabinet.

"What an ignoramus!" shouted the head of the chancellery. "What a

fool, he doesn't know the service! Who asked for his advice? How dare he bother the Minister with his scribbles? Bring me his service record. What the devil next! Appointed on the Minister's instructions. Removed at the demand of Metternich. Who is this Consul in some poky hole in Italy? Ah, this is the journalist for whom the de Tracy family requested a post."

The Minister Molé entered the chancellery.

"Monsieur le Ministre, is it to be tolerated that consuls should address dispatches directly to you?"

Molé absentmindedly took the paper and read: "Romagna, the Papal domain, does not belong to the number of those peaceful countries, about which there is nothing to be known in Paris and about which there is nothing for the Consul to say. I speak thus because Romagna is on the verge of revolt, because Papal Rome may become Republican and on the basis of the precise information in my possession I have ascertained that the correspondence of Austria is directed towards improving the affairs of the Papal Government at the expense of the vital interests of France."

"This is extremely serious," said Molé. "Who wrote this?"

"Some fellow called Beyle, Your Excellency."

"Some fellow!" fumed Molé. "To you he is 'some fellow' but to me he is a French writer, the author of the best books on Italy. Be so good as to give me all his correspondence."

The door banged behind the Minister. The registrars were displeased.

"This is a disgrace, we must put an end to this!" shouted a registrar. "There is Ambassador Saint-Aulaire in Rome. Reports which have not been in his hands cannot be regarded as reliable. This is a case of circumventing the proper authority."

"Yes, that is what we will write," replied the head of the chancellery. "Let the Minister protect whoever he pleases, but we will demand the observance of the chancellery regulations."

Molé came into the room looking pale and agitated.

"We have a war on the African coast, and we are not unconcerned about the south of Italy. What have our diplomatic representatives been doing all this time? Ask Saint-Aulaire."

An hour later an inquiry was ready to be sent to Saint-Aulaire in Rome. Appended to it was a brief note stating that the independent action of Consuls in sending reports to the Ministry was to cease, and a quite microscopic note was addressed to Monsieur Beyle reprimanding him for circumventing the chancellery authorities. Molé was engaged in conversation at the time and signed all the papers without reading them.

"So I have got to be turned into a rat keeping to my own chancellery. Instead of being far-sighted I must become short-sighted. I must learn not to see, to hear and to understand. I must catch the mosquitoes that fly round the flame of my candle of an evening, twiddle my fingers like an old, bilious official and gaze up at the ceiling, waiting for an occasional traveller, receive them with abuse and toss their passports on to the table with contempt. I must learn to play whist with the local gendarmes and in the autumn, in wet weather, in order to warm up my blood a little, stand for hours at the door with captains of French ships and find fault with their ships' papers." So exclaimed Beyle a few days later as he paced up and down his study.

On the third day Beyle was absent. The sky was azure, almost black. The scorched earth and the deserted shore were just like the coast of Africa. "It

is a good thing he is not here," thought Lysimaque. He sat down in the consul's chair, trimmed a quill and wrote :

"Dear Uncle, when at last will it all be cleared up so that we can get our property from the Turks ? I have heard that a good many people have already had their property rights restored to them, thanks to the intervention of the French authorities. I am in a very bad way. Kind-hearted Devaux has left, having been removed on account of his own imprudence. I have already informed you of this and requested you to find out what sort of bird had been appointed my chief. Monsieur Beyle, it appears, has never served in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He is very fond of arguing, and writes almost the whole time. The other day he received a reprimand from Paris. I was delighted to put the document in a conspicuous place in the portfolio for reports. Imagine, he has so little respect for the Government that he paid no more attention to this document than to a newspaper advertisement of a house to let. He put it down on the table with an air, as though it had nothing to do with him. Then he put on his boots, picked up his gun, and went off with a local peasant to shoot. Casamiccio says that he is a remarkable shot—a little old fellow like that with dyed hair ! The other day when he was unwell for a couple of days and did not come to the reception room, I noticed through the door, that was accidentally ajar, that the hair on his lip and chin was quite grey and not at all like the colour of his magnificent side-whiskers. He wears a toupet but with such a proud air that I would not have believed for anything in the world that he was bald on top. You have not yet written to me about him, and meanwhile I should like to know what sort of man he is. He has such a quantity of books in six trunks that I am willing to believe in his erudition, but he has some inexplicable peculiarities which show that he is a man of very low origin. Recently on my way back from Rome I was overtaken by an accident: a black bull that had gone mad in a meadow attacked the coach horse. We had to halt and go on foot to Monterone. This is a lonely inn on the highway about half a mile from the shore. I decided to wait there till the coach was set right, so as not to stand in the sun. What was my amazement when I heard behind the partition the voice of Beyle, who was talking with somebody who called him 'Signor Domenico.' Who Signor Domenico is I do not know. My first thought was that the real consul had been killed on the road to Civita Vecchia, and that some bandit of a Tuscan butcher had come to me with his things and documents. He speaks Italian much better than French. He has an accent which is not French. Please find out about the man whom fate has sent me as my chief.

"However, I saw that it was really Monsieur Beyle who came out of the neighbouring room together with an unknown man of very suspicious aspect. The strangest thing of all was that Beyle looked at me as though we had agreed to meet at this inn. He nodded to me and said: 'I have been waiting for you. Let us drive together.' After all, it does not matter to me who he is, provided my position in the service is not affected. On his writing table I found a verification of my report with very unflattering expressions about me. I'll make him pay for that.

"Dear Uncle, if your commercial affairs have improved, send me at least a little money. My salary always arrives late from Rome, the travelling expenses are great, Beyle does not allow me to write out the accounts without going to Rome, as I used to do under dear Monsieur Devaux. Once again I beg you to inform me whether this man has any weaknesses and peccadilloes, so that I



may feel more reassured in his presence. The worst of all is that he is polite and does not give the impression that he regards me as a fool. I greet you and kiss your hands, dear Uncle."

The letter was dispatched by the first steamer leaving for Marseilles from Civita Vecchia, and the following steamer carried a letter from Beyle to Romain Colomb at an agreed address in Paris. The letter was marked with the name of the fantastic city of Mero, which meant Rome, and was signed "Dominique." It stated that Baron Raisinet, who resided at Civita Vecchia, had applied to the French Consul Beyle with a request for the dispatch of all the new books appearing in Paris, and as Baron Raisinet was shortly going on a journey, all the books should be sent to Monsieur Bazin at Marseilles. The French Consul had met the writer of these lines. Dominique himself was living as before in the town of Abeille. Baron Raisinet, Dominique and Beyle were well known to their cousin Colomb. Colomb arranged the postal relations with the town of Abeille, or Civita Vecchia, through Monsieur Bazin at Marseilles. True, Civita Vecchia was a *porto franco*, but nevertheless the parcels, mail and loads from the ships were handed over first of all to the Papal post-office, and the books would not be allowed through on any account. An attempt was made to get the books into the bag. Lysimaque, who received the bag, stared hard on all the heavy packets that did not look like envelopes containing documents. In the end he would get accustomed to things and then it would be possible to have recourse to the ordinary post, but for the time being Monsieur Bazin knew how to act. Neither the Papal post-office nor the diplomatic bag were aware of Beyle's book dispatches. A month later on the table lay Balzac's *Peau de Chagrin*, a collection of Victor Hugo's poems and a batch of copies of *La Revue de Paris* with Mérimée's letters from Spain, a dramatic excerpt from *Les Mécontents* and a magnificent story *La Partie de Tric-trac*. Mérimée was beginning to write splendidly; he was no longer just a young fellow dawdling about Paris and writing short stories. He was a staid man occupying the post of inspector of the historical monuments of France after unsuccessful service in the three Ministries occupied in turn by the long-nosed d'Argout. Hugo's new dramas were no good at all. They were a torrent of resounding bombastic phrases, verses that hindered the dramatic illusion, which was so enchanting in Shakespeare. One would give Hugo's entire dramatic output for a single magnificent tragedy of Vitet, if only for *La mort d'Henri III*. Balzac's *Peau de Chagrin* was absolutely beyond compare. "It is a reply to my Julien," thought Beyle. "It is the continuation of the argument about fate and will. But clarity of thought and logic is lacking in that tempestuous talent. Balzac does not want to understand that one cannot describe life from the point of view of expediency. The same law of causality prevails in the world of human behaviour as in the movements of the soul. It is precisely this which has created the error of consciousness known as free will. But in all the rest what a good novel it is! How beautifully described is the death of the young man who did not know how to desire, but did not know how to choose objects which could reconcile him to himself! Hence the direct conclusion: individual desires, which are not in accord with reality, one's environment, society and class group, are only capable of putting a man in conflict with himself. But the self-seeking aims of a small group of men aiming only at gain and gold—are these suitable objects for noble desires and the application of a great will? Balzac does not say everything, but he is a thousand times right in putting the problem so clearly.

"One must know how to turn misfortunes and failures to one's advantage. Such is the wisdom of Beylism, and here is its application. Metternich was able to prevent my appointment as Consul at Trieste, but he could not belittle me in my own eyes. The fools in Paris, the short-sighted moles of the chancellery, want to turn me into a chancellery fly beating in vain against the window-pane when the other part of the window is open. I will fly out of this part into the fresh air: I am a writer. So let me begin to write a novel, a great one, capable of gripping both the will and the imagination. We have written about *the red and the black*, now we will write about *the red and the white*. The gods are right. Frédéric Stendhal once said of himself in a letter to *Monsieur Jules*, that is, to Judith Gauthier: 'I am a peculiar animal, not like others, but as the gods made me.' Here in Civita Vecchia one learns to repeat these words. The shades of the Etruscan gods hover over these shores; in confiding myself to their protection, I shall consider that diplomatic failure is a fortunate return to the path of the writer. So let's get down to work. Life is short, and there is a terrible lot to be done, and for this reason life is infinitely good."

Lysimaque was peeping through the key-hole and sprang back quickly, because Beyle abruptly opened the door and nearly struck him on the bridge of the nose with his arm. Once again he was imperturbable and showed no surprise. He smiled and said: "Monsieur Tavernier, you are not tired in the consulate? If you wish, you may go. We will go over the new tariffs to-morrow." Then he went out without waiting for an answer.

He wandered a long time about the squares of the ecclesiastical city, gazing absentmindedly at the tombs of the Popes. Here lay Urbans, Innocents, Gregories, Johns, Piuses, Leos. On the monuments were keys, tiaras, globes. One of the marble slabs was engraved with enormous bees, the emblem of the Buonapartes. Here it was the legitimate ornament of the tomb of a Pope or Cardinal. In France the bees filled the Bourbons with horror and provoked them to persecution. To the peasant walking along the street these bees meant nothing at all. And it was the same with many things. That which produced an impression and played a role in a certain society, in a certain epoch, lost its significance in other circumstances. "I must describe a young man setting out in life in present-day France. Let him be the son of a rich bourgeois. We will call him Leuwen. We will make him an Uhlan and see with whom the young man, who dreams of Napoleon's campaigns, will have to fight. That is the first collision. Having donned the uniform of an Uhlan, he must go to Nancy and thence with his regiment to the battlefield. What battlefield is it? The silk factories of Lyons!

"In fact, we will make the young Frenchmen face such a task. The Uhlan uniform was disgraced during the strike of the workers. Last year Lyons was aflame with revolt for three days. The only crime of the working population consisted in their having asked for an insignificant increase of pay for eleven hours' work.

"Nowhere does one describe France so well and fully as at Civita Vecchia, nowhere does one write about Italy so well as in Paris."

With these thoughts Beyle halted in front of a door bearing an inscription engraved on a marble slab: "Donato Bucci—antiquarian." He knocked and entered. He was met by a man of average height wearing a red velvet cap and gold spectacles, who gave him a pleasant smile. With a broad provincial gesture he invited Beyle to enter a large room full of tables loaded with statuettes and piles of books bound in white parchment and dyed skin. In a dim corner

a bust of Winckelmann gleamed white on a pedestal. A second door led to a veranda embowered in foliage. The room had no windows, but a soft light streamed through the dull glass of the openings in the ceiling. Two men were sitting with an open folio before them at a table with coffee-cups and a dish of fried artichokes.

Signor Bucci introduced them to Beyle. They were Blasi and the lawyer Manzi. When Beyle was on his way home late in the evening, an obscure figure accompanied him as far as the Consulate. That day Beyle's chances of winning the confidence of Cardinal Galeffi suffered a sharp decline. Donato Bucci, archaeologist, collector of antiques, the owner of a library, and the lawyer Manzi were the most notoriously suspect characters in the whole town. They scarcely made any secret of their liberalism, and if it was difficult to trap a carpenter or cobbler at revolutionary work one might rest assured these two Freemasons would meet their fate in the end.

Even Lysimaque did not expect that the French Consul would emerge from his solitude and spend several hours so boldly with Donato Bucci. He shrugged his shoulders and looked at Beyle with an air as though the Consul had come to the end of his song.

The subsequent weeks were still more eloquent. From Marseilles came piles of books with a categorical demand from Monsieur Saint-Aulaire in Rome that all books addressed to the French Consul should be allowed to pass without previous inspection.

When the seminarist spy reported this outrageous fact to the Cardinal, the old Governor of the town, after taking too big a pinch of snuff, waved his handkerchief and said rapidly: "Leave it! Leave it! Do you want me to be arrested by the liberals, like the Governor of Bologna, who is a Cardinal the same as I am?"

In the secret packets arriving from Paris there was a communication stating that the young Italian Mazzini, who had been in prison and was now at liberty, was living at Marseilles and intended to go to Italy for political purposes. Mazzini had been a Carbonaro, but had now left the Carbonaro movement. Nevertheless the French Government would not allow this Italian citizen to leave for Italy and instructed French officials in the territory of Italy to refrain from giving any assistance to Mazzini and his friends. Beyle did not like this policy at all. "Has Louis Philippe not retained even the slightest recollection of the honour of July, that he should disgrace France in this way and hold back the young Italian?" thought Beyle. He had heard about Mazzini from the Florentine Vieusseux, who founded the first public library in Tuscany. There too he had learnt that Mazzini was at the head of the new society "Young Italy," the aim of which was to bring about the unification of the country. A wave of revolution was passing over Europe: from Paris and Brussels to Warsaw there was unrest everywhere. The July days were answered in the east by the Polish war against Nicholas I. Disarmed Polish troops and tens of thousands of refugees streamed towards Paris. La Fayette set up a committee to aid the refugees. The Polish poet Mickiewicz had left Rome and was roaming nobody knew where. Dispatches arrived in such numbers and in such a code that Beyle had to give up his literary work. Sitting alone at night, without Lysimaque, he deciphered with a pencil the dispatches, instructions, summaries and orders, read them and afterwards burnt them over a candle standing in a bowl of water. By the morning there were heaps of black ashes, and in his head there was black political soot. On the one hand France was the bearer

of revolutionary ideas, a country which was not afraid of the future, on the other hand this same France was acting as the enslaver of the colonies and as the oppressor of the Fourth Estate. It was not for nothing that in the secret summaries of the Ministry there were direct allusions to the fact that the illegal "Society of the Rights of Man" was in touch with the Italian revolutionary movement, the "Society of the Friends of the People," which had been proscribed, was declared to be the enemy of France. Blanqui made a speech as defendant at the trial and demanded that the thirty million workers should be given the right to vote, a right which they would use to make laws in their own interests: all the surplus money of the haves would be confiscated and devoted to the organization of public credit, of which the have-nots would avail themselves.

Everything spoke of continuous unrest, the instability of political systems, the beginning of a social débâcle. At dawn, tired with working, Beyle would jot down notes and plans for the future chapters of *The Red and the White*, and he would put into a big blue portfolio the papers concerning his diplomatic work in Italy. He saw distinctly in his mind the narrow horizon of the little city of Parma, one of the most beautiful cities of Italy. He peopled it with men and women endowed with the favourite Beylist characteristics. He noted the peculiarities of each of the participants in the history of Parma and, re-shaping his impressions of their triumphs and failures, filled with them the blue portfolio, in which he kept the best recollections and impressions of his own life. Thus he re-shaped his days and hours, his labours and his perceptions of happiness, getting rid of the sorrow and imprinting the joy. From that day life flowed more smoothly and one felt that there was a vast distance between the Beyle, who a long time ago laboured strenuously to complete *Le Rouge et le Noir*, and the Beyle who gripped his impressions with ease and creative power and gave them life.

At the end of February, 1832, after receiving a dispatch from Paris, he was suddenly obliged to interrupt all his work. Real life was beginning at last. Louis Philippe, having become King after the July barricades, refused to help Poland in the struggle against Tsar Nicholas of Russia, giving as his pretext the principle of non-intervention. At the same time he tolerated the intervention of Austria in practically all the affairs of Europe. And now, when the whole of northern Italy was ready to revolt, Austria intended to extend her claws to the Adriatic beyond her Lombardo-Venetian possessions. This could not be tolerated—it was necessary to stand across the path of the Austrians while the French were still liked in Italy. Beyle welcomed the seizure of the Adriatic coast in the region of Ancona by a French detachment. Three ships, *Artemise*, *Suffren* and *Victoire*, appeared off Monte Guasco and entered the round port. The Papal garrison refused to let the French into Ancona. Then the French sappers blew up the gates of the fortress and without firing a shot removed the Papal and Austrian flags from all the institutions.

The French Consul Henri Beyle, who had become once again a commissaire des guerres, sat in civilian clothes amid the guns and drums outside a tent at the bivouac near Ancona. Austrian troops were approaching and all sorts of unpleasant things could be expected. The ships with eighteen cannon were ready for action, pickets were stationed in the north and west, but Monsieur Saint-Aulaire, who in his leisure hours in Rome was writing a history of the Fronde, forgot to send the money. The soldiers did not get their pay, the sailors surged on shore, and Beyle feared they might take such measures to satisfy their needs that the population would begin to regret the departure of

the Austrians and the disarming of the Papal garrison. The officers saw for the first time this civilian sitting at a field table. On learning that he was a commissary of supply they demanded that he should distribute the regimental funds among the officers. Beyle listened to their demands and shook his head, but when they became too insistent he raised his voice and demanded that the lieutenant should cease his importunities.

"The officers want money for the theatre, but the lower ranks have not had dinner to-day. The officers want amusements, but the lower ranks will be forced by hunger to offend the inhabitants of the country. Please make no attempt to seize the regimental funds."

"Who are you to talk like that?" shouted the little lieutenant. "Show your authorization!"

"It is sufficient to put you under arrest," said Beyle and demanded horses for himself.

A carriage was harnessed with artillery horses and, with a squad of cavalry as an escort, the commissaire des guerres took his seat in the equipage with an extremely grave look and set off for the city. A couple of hours later life in the camp began to hum. Beyle signed the documents relating to the payment for everything supplied to the French detachment in the way of provisions. His excellent knowledge of the Italian language, his liveliness, intelligence, open character, his mention of a whole series of names beloved of the Italians, disposed the hearts of the plenipotentiaries of the city towards Beyle, and what might have ended in a catastrophe served as a pledge of good relations. A cheerful mood replaced the weariness and unrest of the soldiers. Beyle's enemies of the morning became his friends by evening.

"A full stomach is an untroubled conscience," said Beyle with a laugh to the lieutenant who had shouted at him in the morning.

"A French citizen must have a ready table everywhere," said the lieutenant pertly.

"I don't think a French citizen should become a marauder, and even less a grasshopper counting on a ready table."

The conversation took a sharp turn and was already becoming an open quarrel, as Beyle declared rather bluntly that he did not value French citizenship in the least and that here, at Ancona, France might disgrace herself still further. The quarrel did not develop only thanks to General Cubières, who went up to Beyle, took him by the arm and led him away.

"Do you know, *monsieur le Commissaire*, that the foremost pickets have been driven off by an unknown partisan detachment? They are not the Papal garrison and not Austrians. I gave orders not to fire."

"And you did quite rightly," said Beyle. "I know what it is all about. Allow me to go off for a day and everything will be settled."

"Do as you think fit. In this damned city I am as if in a dark forest. I can't make out who is friend and who is enemy, whom we are fighting, what we are defending and what it's all about anyway."

Beyle made no reply. A batman brought him his travelling things. He donned a riding suit and with a Corsican dragoon to serve him on the journey set out for the north. He returned next evening and told the General briefly that no danger was to be expected. The General refrained from inquisitive questions; the detachment had already developed a silent admiration for the round-faced commissaire, the only civilian among the troops, who had averted some great danger, one that was not so much military as political.

It was a simple matter. Beyle, who was well acquainted with Italy and had friends in almost every town in such classes of society as neither Saint-Aulaire, nor Molé, nor Virginie Ancelot, nor the Paris reviewers who wrote about Stendhal's books, ever dreamt of, turned up in the midst of the secret Italian workers who were preparing the revolt of Northern Italy. He had a long and heated talk with them. He did not deny the repulsive significance of the French occupation but frankly placed before them the question of frustrating the claims of Austria by any means.

"Take advantage of it," he said, "so that the Austrian gendarmes may not come and foist something worse upon you."

The names of the persons whom Beyle saw are unknown. All that is known is that he was in Sinigaglia, that he was met there "as a brother and friend," that on the way he recalled the history of this famous city, where Cesare Borgia set a trap for the Cardinal Princes who were hostile to him, and after meeting them unarmed, embraced them—and half an hour later their corpses lay in Sinigaglia. Beyle insisted that the Carbonari "should not be carried away by the splendour of French arms." He himself soon returned to Civita Vecchia and thence to Rome. Saint-Aulaire was delighted, but Beyle did not tell anybody the details of his operation. He merely asked Saint-Aulaire to give him leave to go to Paris.

"In a year's time," replied Saint-Aulaire.

The French detachment stayed at Ancona six years.

## CHAPTER FORTY-FIVE

DURING THE EXPEDITION OF THE THREE SHIPS BEYLE VISITED NAPLES AND PALERMO. In a letter to di Fiore he described a ball given by M. Latour-Maubourg, the French Ambassador in Naples. He watched the dancers and, above all, the King of Naples, who wore an extraordinary military uniform and enormous spurs. Mademoiselle Laferronnays, a French beauty, blushed down to her shoulders as she danced with the King. Beyle noted the conversation: "The King said: 'Ah! mon Dieu, mademoiselle, I engaged you to dance, thinking it was a quadrille, but it turns out to be a gallop. I don't know this dance.'—'I have very rarely danced the gallop,' said the young lady, scarcely uttering the words. Finally the King said: 'There is the first couple, they don't do it very well. Let us hope we won't do any worse.' And he began to prance about. He is very stout, very tall and very timid; you can imagine how he danced. His spurs inconvenienced him terribly."

But there were impressions of quite a different kind. Early one morning Beyle went on foot from Naples through Pozzuoli to Cape Misenum. He arrived there when the sun was still low in the sky. He inspected Baiac, talked with the peasants and fishermen there and, being dressed like everybody else and forgetting all about the French language and French ways of thinking, felt much happier than at Latour-Maubourg's ball. He told the peasants that once upon a time it was the patrician bathing-place of ancient Italy, and all of a sudden one of them informed him that on the previous day he had dug up a "marble man." Beyle immediately inspected the find, recognized it as a bust of Tiberius, the work of an excellent sculptor, quickly struck a bargain with the peasant and returned to Naples before midday in a two-wheeled cart drawn by a mule, carrying his find wrapped up in a mat. He wrote to di Fiore: "One

of the best sculptors in Rome, my intimate friend (who loves beautiful things as I do, that is, passionately, to the point of foolishness), Vogelsberg, undertakes to restore to Rome the treasure that I have found." Hence it was necessary for him to go to Rome.

On his return from the Ancona expedition Beyle found the bust of Tiberius in Civita Vecchia entire.

On the way to Rome Alexander Turgenev stopped in Florence. Noting in his diary the absence of bookshops in the Italian towns, he gladly mentions Florence as an exception. There a citizen of Geneva, the bookseller Vieuksseux, had opened a reading room (*gabinetto de lettura*), which soon became the meeting place of the young men of Florence and the exiles from Milan and Naples. The ruler of Tuscany tried to govern in an enlightened way and was outwardly opposed to the Austrian methods.

Alexander Turgenev went to see the reading room. There he met the leader of the young Italian circle, Capponi, made the acquaintance of Vieuksseux and in a study filled with all the novelties of European literature saw Henri Beyle bending over the books. After greeting each other they began to talk about Paris.

"I still receive letters that have been stabbed through and fumigated," said Beyle. "Hasn't the cholera abated yet?"

"In Russia it is at its height, especially in the summer months. As for Paris, it is not noticed there, but my letters to my brother have been subjected to double fumigation, and as the result of fumigation by the police he often gets something quite different from what I wrote. They say the same thing is being done in England. My brother wrote that there was a question in Parliament about opening the letters of the Carbonaro Mazzini."

"Mazzini is no longer a Carbonaro," said Beyle. "But apparently your brother is now remote from the movement?"

"In Paris I did not like to speak about it openly, dear friend."

"Well, what about here? I have the impression that he had far greater significance politically and therefore was much more dangerous to the Tsar than, for instance, Koreff, who is also undoubtedly a liberal and took part in the constitutional plans of Hardenberg."

"But at present we are doing our utmost to let the subject be forgotten."

"I understand," said Beyle. "You can rely on me entirely, but I will tell you frankly that the alien Austrian regime is corrupting Italy less than the regime of Louis Philippe is corrupting France. Here every movement reaches boiling point, as the result of which human character is hardened and energy is strengthened in the struggle. In Italian families you notice this in their faces when they are talking."

"Shall I be admitted into the families?" asked Turgenev.

"You will, but the more openly a family lives, the more cautious you have to be. I advise you not to talk to anybody about your brother. However, I am sure that some families in Rome will receive you particularly well precisely for the purpose of finding out the attitude of Monsieur Nikolai Turgenev."

"I am tormented by doubts," said Turgenev, "whether to continue the journey. They say the roads are not safe."

"At present things are much quieter. Last year Bologna, Parma, Modena, Romagna, were seething like hot lava—this year it's the Papal region and Piedmont. There has been a good deal of shooting and hanging. The Holy Father has acquired a firm hand in the executioner's craft, but at present the roads are

really dangerous only in the south. Nevertheless the patience of the Italians is inexhaustible. But another year of such a regime and impoverishment, and it will be impossible to go by the northern roads on account of the bandits. All the young and strong are being driven to crime by the Austrians."

"I forgot to tell you a piece of news. In France they are starting to lay down railroads. A steam-engine goes between St. Etienne and Rouen to the delight of the surrounding villages."

"Yes, I am convinced that in the near future steam vehicles will travel all over France."

"I don't think so," said Turgenev. "The Parisians regard these experiments like a toy, but if the railroad were laid down as far as Siberia, how many Russian hearts would rejoice!"

Beyle looked at Turgenev and remarked: "No railroad can be laid down to my exiled friends, any more than it can be laid down to one's youth and the Milan of 1816. But tell me all about Paris. For all my dislike of that city, I should still like to know how . . . at least how Clara is getting on?"

"How did you come to know her?" asked Turgenev, trying to hide his surprise, as though he had heard a jest that was in bad taste.

Beyle glanced at Turgenev. Then with a shy and awkward look he said: "Excuse my jest, I quite forgot that you did not know Mérimée's nickname."

"My God!" exclaimed Turgenev, "I thought you were asking me about my brother's fiancée, Clara Viaris!"

"All the better if each one has his Clara," said Beyle. "But I am sure you get letters more often than I do."

"Yes, I write regularly and get replies regularly. Shall I see you in Rome?"

"Yes," replied Beyle, "if you are there in October."

"I shall be there in December," said Turgenev.

*Diary of A. I. Turgenev (White parchment copy-book).*

"Florence, 26th November, 1832, Leghorn—Pisa. 2nd December. Perugia.

"5th December. At five o'clock in the evening we left Neppi, turning off before Civita Castellana from the Flaminian Way at Monterossi into the new road, which is now known as the Via Cassio. At nine o'clock from a small hill I saw . . . Rome!

"At half past ten we arrived in time for luncheon. Then I met Beyle-Stendhal and showed him his book. He advised me to call on Ccsi and gave me a note for him. At half past twelve we set out again.

"6th December. Beyle sent me Michelet's *History of Rome* with a clever note and warned me against a cicerone, whose name begins with 'V'—probably Visconti. Thanks! A day is enough for me to see the Pope and the Vatican. (*Note in French*) 'In spite of the grandeur and poetry of the Vatican and St. Peter's, my imagination did not catch fire. The spirit of the Italian exiles leads me to prosaic and sad thoughts. The processions of priests and the papal service cannot drive away the thoughts of the other, beautiful and poor Italy, which my reason sees clearly.' (Extract from Beyle's letter to me)."

On 7th December on the way to the Corso, A. I. Turgenev saw coming towards him a tall, well-made man in a broad-brimmed hat, with magnificent curly hair, a reddish-brown beard and blue eyes. Passing Italians respectfully doffed their hats to him. From the enthusiasm and looks of admiration with which the passers-by accompanied this man one might have thought that he



was the heir to the throne or an exceptionally important personage. When he approached Turgenev, he halted and impetuously offered him his hand. He was the artist Carl Pavlovich Brullov, who was exhibiting in Rome a picture, *The Last Days of Pompeii*, which he had just finished. He was thirty-two, carefree, and full of energy. He got the idea for the picture in 1829, while listening to Puccini's opera *The Last Days of Pompeii*. The buried city was only just beginning to appear from underneath the layer of lava. Beyle wrote to di Fiore in Paris in January, 1832: "The mosaics discovered at Pompeii only a couple of months ago give a picture of what was best in ancient painting."

On 7th December A. I. Turgenev, Brullov, Sobolevski and Kiprenski dined together in a Roman trattoria, and next day Turgenev made a brief note: "8th December. Dined at Zinaida Volkonski's. Afterwards went with Beyle to Saint-Aulaire and Count Zircur for the soirée."

On the way they talked about Brullov's picture. Beyle did not like it.

"Advise your friend not to exhibit his picture outside Italy. I have information that the young people of the artistic circles of France are at present ill-disposed towards everything Russian. The Tsar's treatment of the Poles is revolting, and the picture is a bad one. Why has it made an impression on the Italians at the present time? Simply because there has not been any real painting in Italy for a long time. This absence of painting is not in the least due to the absence of the 'great breath of the Middle Ages,' as some Monsieur Victor Hugo would say—that is nonsense! Genius always lives in the midst of the people, as the spark in the flint. Only a certain combination of circumstances is needed for the spark to fly out of the dead stone. Art has declined merely because it is without that broad conception of the world, which impelled previous artists along the path of creative work. The details, forms and trifles of a subject, no matter how artistic they may be, do not entitle the artist to be considered as a genius or a man of talent. To be either, one must create a system that will embrace and co-ordinate the whole world of contemporary ideas and subject them to one single vital and dominating principle. Only then is the thinker possessed by the fanaticism of ideas, that is, by that clear, definite belief in his cause, without which there is no true life either in art or in science. The old Italian artists had this belief, and for that reason they were real creators and not copyists, not poor imitators of obsolete forms. Moreover I have never separated the artist from the thinker, just as I cannot separate the artistic form from the artistic idea. I cannot imagine art apart from the social conditions in which the nation in question finds itself. In them and in them alone it found its strength and its weakness, acquired great significance or became banal. I am not implying that Brullov's work belongs to the latter category; but it is dry, academic and far-fetched, it is pure classicism, which says nothing to the mind or to the heart. There is a complete absence of that policy which forms the essence of historical painting."

As almost every one of Beyle's assertions was contradicted by Turgenev, the argument was a very lively one. As they approached the French Consulate, Beyle suddenly changed the subject and asked: "Are you going to Zircur's after Saint-Aulaire?"

"Yes," replied Turgenev.

"I like his Russian wife very much, although I can never pronounce her maiden name. I am afraid old Zircur himself may have retained some of Polignac's habits after being that Minister's secretary for so long."

Just then a dark-haired young man with very red lips like cherries, came

up. He greeted Beyle coldly and ceremoniously. All three went up the stairs of the Embassy.

"Some time I'll tell you what kind of man he is," whispered Beyle in Turgenev's ear. "He is the 'V' I wrote to you about."

"9th December. Went to see Beyle at nine o'clock. Found him still in bed. Arranged to begin walks in Rome. Visconti is a spy of the Papal Government.

"Zircur called and we set out together to the villa of the French Ambassador Saint-Aulaire.

"10th December. Am still reading Tasso with great pleasure. Went to see Brullov. Saw the poetry of his picture *The Last Days of Pompeii*. He based the principal features on Pliny's text and the objects preserved at Pompeii, which he saw twice. . . .

"At twelve o'clock Beyle-Stendhal called on me, and we set out to look at Rome, first of all the church of St. Peter and Mont' Orio, as in his opinion there is no better view of Rome than from this height. On the way he pointed out to me several palaces and churches, the ancient Pasquino statue by the Braschi palace. This Braschi was the last nephew of a Pope, who managed by robbery to build himself a palace. The Pope was long unaware of his nephew's wealth. It is said that when he saw it for the first time, he shed tears and returned to the Vatican without visiting his nephew in his sumptuous palace."

Towards evening, in the hours when the noise of Rome was dying down, the large pages of Turgenev's diary were being filled with a detailed account of all that he had seen during the day. Not without amazement Turgenev records Beyle's anecdotes about Papal Rome and notes his perpetual hostility to religion and his jeers at the Church, which he regarded as a very serious organization for profit. Turgenev describes the observant eyes of Beyle, who, in talking about the Rome of all ages, watched the impression he made on his companion. Nobody could talk about Rome so well, so fully and interestingly, nobody had such a profound knowledge of ancient, medieval and contemporary Italy as this learned Consul. He was no longer the frivolous and witty Parisian—he was quite a different being, one who was greeted with respect by the French who did not like him, of whom the zealous Catholic Italians spoke caustically and contemptuously, and whom the poorly dressed common people of Rome greeted with affection like a friend. "Where does this man, who is so aristocratic, get his democratic spirit from? Why does he choose his friends from the Roman rabble?"

From the windows of the Vatican Beyle pointed out the blue Alban mountains and Tasso's oak-tree on the high bank of the Tiber.

"We arranged to meet to-morrow and trot about Rome again. After having admired that superb scene from the windows of the Vatican, we separated. I dined at Zircur's with Visconti. From there I went to Guriev's for the evening. I took a carriage for the whole day."

It was six o'clock in the evening. The Russian dilettante Turgenev, collecting documents relating to the history of Russia and travelling for the purpose of attending lectures and sight-seeing, did not weary Beyle in the least, but to go with him to Madame Zircur's to meet Visconti seemed to him more than he could bear. He never forced himself to put up with the company of people he did not like. "Beyle never makes any distinction between a criminal and a bore—to him it is the same thing," said Mérimée. Turgenev went alone: Beyle did not accompany him. He wanted to take another look from the

windows at the Janiculum. Then he went to Trastevere—beyond the Tiber, ascended the Janiculum to the grave of Torquato Tasso and sat down on the bench under the oak-tree, whence it was particularly pleasant of an evening to observe Rome quietening down. The sun was already low in the sky. The clear windless day was dying. The roofs of the houses, the domes of the churches, the crosses and towers were gradually darkening. The rapid Italian dusk was falling; an hour or so later the streets were wrapped in shadows, and long semi-transparent streaks of mist crept up from the banks of the Tiber. Only the highest roofs and the dome of St. Peter's were still gilded by the rays of the setting sun. Rome presented a spectacle of fading magnificence. One felt a regret for the departed glory of her history, for the irretrievable years of her past. One gazed eagerly at the last bright patches of the sunset and at the contours of the majestic buildings that had not yet disappeared in the dusk. The grating sound of wheels on the ancient stones seemed to be infinitely remote, the dying voices of the bells spoke of the quiet end of the day. It was time to go before the *aria cattiva* appeared in the lower regions—the noxious air, that gave one a terrible fever. But Beyle found it difficult to move away. In spite of his lucid thoughts it became almost impossible for him to fight his obscure feelings. He suddenly realized that in forty-four days' time he would be fifty. His heart contracted at the thought. He tried to make out which had appeared first—the idea that the sun that had set would never return, or the consciousness that he had half a century on his shoulders. The two were interconnected. For the first time he realized with all his being what death was. Whatever the subsequent days might be like, he already knew that hidden behind all the fullness of life and happiness were emptiness and the wearisome moments of passing into nothingness. And as in a state of health, the idea of death had only come to him through his reason and he had never experienced a sense of utter extinction, he now feared that his present sensation might be due to illness. Death was a sad, inevitable event, there was no way of averting it, therefore it was useless to poison oneself prematurely with these thoughts. He must take himself in hand, and as he was approaching the age of fifty, he must re-establish all the past in his memory, write down everything pleasing that he could recollect, and that would give a complete idea of himself in the ups and downs of life.

"Am I already home?" thought Beyle, when the servant brought in the candles. The big dark-green copy-book with its clasp and thick pages of good Dutch paper seemed to have been bought on purpose. That evening he jotted down the first notes for *La Vie de Henri Brûlard*.

In 1830, on the way back from Russia, his life had been split in two. In order to jot down everything without losing time and the chain of recollections, he must tell the story of Henri Brûlard's life, beginning from his childhood up to the age of thirty, and at the same time jot down the encounters, events and impressions of the man, who knew himself better than anything else in the world and who had turned himself into a laboratory for the study of life.

Thus the *Souvenirs d'Egotisme* were begun—almost a diary commencing from the thirty-first year of his life. It was the answer to Beyle's constant aspiration of realizing the dual design of writing two different novels, two critical articles, two autobiographies.

On 12th April, 1833, A. I. Turgenev wrote to his brother: "Rome, No. 108. I shall go perhaps to Civita Vecchia for Zhukovski's arrival, but shall

not go by steamer. I shall return here and set out immediately with Angrig, in order to avoid the sea which would prevent me from enjoying the talk with Zhukovski, and I shall arrive in Naples a day later than he. As the diligence leaves Civita Vecchia three times a week, I must leave either on the 19th . . . or the 21st . . . I shall talk it over with the Consul Beyle, who came to see me yesterday but did not find me at home, and I shall settle with him about my trip."

*Diary of A. I. Turgenev.*

"24th April. At six o'clock in the morning I set out from Rome with three Romans and an Englishman for Orvieto. From there it took us three hours to reach Civita Vecchia. At last we saw the fortifications of Civita Vecchia and a sentry on one of the bastions. At three o'clock in the afternoon I was already at the inn, sought out the French Vice-Consul and found him on a sofa with Greek and French books, with which he helps to while away dull moments. I gave him Beyle's letter and he immediately offered me his services. We went round the town and the harbour, saw some Etruscan vases at a local antiquary's, paid a visit to the archaeologist Manzi, whom I knew of from the journal of the archaeological society in Rome, and inspected the harbour built by the Emperor Trajan. Pliny writes that he saw Trajan here inspecting the construction of the harbour. In Trajan's time, immense stone rings were fixed to the wharf. Almost all the faces of the women I have met here are good-looking. Some are beautiful. These roses are doomed to waste their perfume on the desert air.

"After dinner Lysimaque Tavernier came for me again. I inspected the local prison. It holds political prisoners and a notorious band of robbers, whose leader Gasparoni killed one hundred and twenty persons with his own hands. The whole band is with him, and there are twenty-two murderers. The Pope made terms with them, promising not to execute them if they would give themselves up. They did. Gasparoni has nothing evil and bestial in his face, on the contrary, he gives the impression of a kind of foxy good nature, like Speranski. I gazed at him a long while, and he gazed at me without the least embarrassment. The others were smiling. Next day, at six o'clock in the morning, I set out with Lysimaque for the little town of Corneto, two hours distant from here, standing on a height about half a mile from the sea. It has no more than three thousand native inhabitants, but the excavations of the neighbouring necropolis of Tarquinii—the ancient Etruscan city—are attracting a good number of Romans and foreigners. In Corneto we ordered dinner of the mother of a charming Gioconda. We went along the ravines, we were on the soil, on the tombs of Etruria, whose civilization is more ancient than that of Rome. My companion descended into one of the recently discovered caves and walked in it under the ground, but the ladder was too upright for me, and I followed the example of Beyle, who did not descend into this tomb when he was here. I went into those which had convenient entrances, inspected the Etruscan paintings and inscriptions and prowled about.

"26th April. 5 o'clock in the morning. Latour-Maubourg has been appointed the new Ambassador in Rome. Stiff, but intelligent.

"Am waiting for Zhukovski at Civita Vecchia. The day before yesterday I gave Beyle's letter to his Vice-Consul Lysimaque Tavernier, a young Greek, who says that he does all the office work for him, as Beyle lives most of the time in Rome. Beyle wrote to him about me: 'Put my library and my wine

at Turgenev's disposal.' We have been constantly together for two days. I passed a building with a double-headed eagle on the front. I turned back so as not to meet the Russian Consul Aratta, one of the local merchants."

Into the semi-circular harbour of Civita Vecchia sailed the ship *Comet*, a brigantine with eighteen cannon, greeted with a salvo of cannon and with the flags of the Greek and Roman ships. The steamer *Ferdinand* arrived, but still Zhukovski did not turn up. At last from Beyle's room Turgenev and Lysimaque observed through the telescope a black dot on the horizon. By now it was evening. Lysimaque said that to-morrow the dot would become the steamer *Sully* and enter the port. In the evening the French war brigantine took on board the painter Horace Vernet, who had been summoned to Paris by Louis Philippe in order to send him to Africa to immortalize the heroism of the French in the Algerian campaign. Turgenev slept badly. He feared he would not see Zhukovski or get a letter from his brother. Zhukovski was for him a messenger from his inhospitable, but beloved native country, which he wanted to forget, but could not, as one tries to forget a beloved who has caused one infinite pain. In these moments he did not want the cynical, clever Beyle, who obscured the Christian humility of the poet Zhukovski—his brother's intercessor.

"28th April. Went out in a boat to meet Zhukovski. Saw him on the deck, but was not allowed to go to him."

Clenching his fists, Turgenev returned to the shore. Running like a young boy, he flew upstairs to Beyle's study and told Lysimaque with indignation about his failure.

"The quarantine has not yet been lifted, although the cholera has ceased," said Lysimaque. "I've had a lot of bother with the cholera," he added, addressing the four plump, sunburnt Marseilles merchants who were sitting in the study with pipes in their mouths. "As you see, he goes off to Rome, leaves me all alone and I have to do the work."

"French trade suffers from a Consul like that," remarked one of the merchants.

"Not only trade, but something else besides," remarked a younger man from Marseilles. "We all notice, *Monsieur le Consul*, that when you go away, disorder commences. We have not even seen Monsieur Beyle in person."

Lysimaque checked himself, being unwilling to continue the conversation in Turgenev's presence. But the ship-owners let themselves go and began to sing the praises of Lysimaque and to abuse the man who instead of occupying himself with serious and socially useful business wrote useless books which nobody wanted.

The senior merchant, in spite of Lysimaque's impatient gestures, ended his indignant speech with the words: "I tell you for the second time, *Monsieur le Consul*, that whether you succeed in getting rid of this liberal and Jacobin, we in any case shall not hesitate to petition the Ministry on behalf of the merchants to appoint you Consul."

Lysimaque waved his hands. "Good heavens!" he exclaimed. "How can one say anything? My relations with Beyle are so good that I willingly forgive him his weaknesses."

"But don't you agree? Why, only a month ago you asked for this yourself."

Not wishing to hear any more revelations, Turgenev asked Lysimaque to help him get a place in the steamer *Sully*. Lysimaque complied with this

request in a very obliging manner. He was so glad that Turgenev would not see Beyle next day that he went with him personally in the boat and demanded by order of the Consul that he should be allowed on board. While Turgenev was embracing Zhukovski, Lysimaque instructed the captain to take Turgenev to Naples.

## CHAPTER FORTY-SIX

HAVING BEGUN THE "SOUVENIRS D'EGOTISME" IN ROME ON 20TH JUNE, 1832, Beyle crossed out this title in November and, imitating Rousseau, wrote on the front page the word "Confessions." Distant excursions to Monte Albano, the Sabine Mountains, hunting trips with peasants, excursions on horseback into the mountains where they burnt charcoal, to the fishing villages along the shore, the nights spent with shepherds, the encounters with the smugglers and the revolutionary youth of Romagna had restored Beyle's health. More and more frequently he pondered on the causes of his attachment to Rousseau. He recalled his grandfather Gagnon's opinion of Rousseau's *Contrat Social*, he recalled how the Jacobin Gros, who had taught him mathematics, when seeing his pupil off from Grenoble to the Paris Polytechnic, had given him *La Nouvelle Héloïse* to read on the journey. Now, more and more frequently, he thought about the "natural man," about life in harmony with the laws of nature, about the amazing influence of nature on man's state of mind and behaviour, about the supreme right of the people.

One day Beyle was interrupted in his work by the postman of the Papal Post, who handed him a letter from Levavasseur—a Paris publisher and bookseller. Levavasseur blamed him because a second edition of *Le Rouge et le Noir* had been published in Brussels. Beyle shrugged his shoulders and reflected with some bitterness that this piracy would cost him at least six thousand francs. "This good man thinks that I am in a position to bring a lawsuit against the Brussels pirates from here." Nevertheless, Levavasseur asked whether there was a chance of receiving something from Monsieur Beyle. Beyle replied to him on 11th November :

"I am really touched, monsieur, by the kind letter which you have taken the trouble to write to me. I am not sociable by nature; most men bore me. Consequently a good many people would be delighted to say: 'He does not attend to his business; sec, he has time to write twaddle.' How would it be, if in this twaddle there were some occasional little pleasantries on the silly things that are useful to the high and mighty? What would your friend the *Journal des Débats* say? It is permitted to say everything, provided you do not speak of this or of that or the other thing; which tends to make us recommence the literature of the Empire.

"I have written a novel, the style of which, I hope, is less abrupt than that of *Le Rouge et le Noir*. If literature could give me three thousand francs a year, I would send you *Le Chasseur Vert*.

"I have bought at a very high price some old manuscripts in faded ink, which date from the sixteenth and the seventeenth century. They contain in the demi-patois of the time, which I understand quite well, short stories of eighty pages each. I shall call them *Historiettes Romaines*. There is nothing spicy as in Tallemant des Réaux; they are more sombre and more interesting. Although, in the eyes of a man of intelligence, love plays an important part in them, these historiettes would be a useful complement to the history of Italy

in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. These were the manners that gave birth to the Raphaels and Michelangelos, whom it is so stupidly proposed to reproduce in academies and schools of fine art. One forgets that one must have an intrepid spirit to ply the cleverest brush, and one only succeeds in turning out poor devils condemned to pay court to an office chief in order to get an order for a picture.

"But forgive me, monsieur, I am straying from the subject. I am imitating Pindar too much. Do not show my letter to the half-wits.

"I am now writing a book which may be a great blunder. It is *Mes Confessions*, similar in style to Jean-Jacques Rousseau, but with more frankness. I have begun with the Russian campaign of 1812. I was angry at all the platitudes of M. de Ségur, who is anxious to get the Grand Cordon de la Légion d'Honneur.

"I am told that you are announcing a new novel by M. de Stendhal. A la bonne heure. If I get an inheritance of an income of three thousand francs, I will send you *Le Chasseur Vert*. This novel can also be called *Les Bois de Prémol*, if it suits you better. That, monsieur, is all I can do at present."

At the beginning of the winter of 1833 Beyle was in Paris. The second-hand bookstalls, the quays of the Seine, the tender greyish light, the chestnut-trees in the Tuileries—all was as of old, but the former life had vanished. Count Gazul was in London. He had had a romance with George Sand. It was already the second time, but now it was shattered, apparently for ever. On Beyle's table lay a book entitled *La Double Méprise*, which had just appeared in the bookshops, while the author, Prosper Mérimée, was wandering about immense London with Sutton-Sharpe. "What has happened to him? Mérimée, who reproached me for the cruelty of the last chapters of *Le Rouge et le Noir*, has suddenly taken a French theme and written such a cruel, arid thing that your throat is parched and your lips crack when you read it. That is how he understands the Paris of to-day. He has a brilliant pen, but it is overheated and burns the paper. The story of Darcy is the most tragic story of a modern soul." Beyle closed the book with a heavy heart. In Paris, for which he nevertheless longed, and not only in order to settle his literary affairs, there was not a hundredth part of that wonderful air which he breathed in Italy. Here the air was vitiated, the horizons gone. It was all hollow! What was France nowadays? Time was measured by business men. This group of bustling men, breathing with full lungs, scraping up gold from the stock-exchange lottery called France, did not have time even for a contemptuous sneer at the impoverished nobles or the "loafers" who sauntered along the boulevards, wrote poetry and published books.

To the universal indignation of the lower classes France refused to go to the aid of Poland which had risen. Under the pretext of prudence and love of peace the same France permitted Austria to crush without hindrance the Italian revolutions, which were sisters of the July days. On the day of his coronation Louis Philippe transferred through the bankers the whole fortune of the House of Orleans to the name of his children and deposited it in the Bank of England. At the same time he kept asking the Chamber for money for the Royal Family. The Chamber refused the royal demands for the fifth time. In place of the old salons with their gaiety and naturalness, with the graceful light-heartedness and unrestrained wit of the women, there appeared in the bankers' circles, in the faubourg St. Honoré, the manners of the English clubs, permeated, in contrast to England, with a partiality for gross banquetings and vulgar, unrefined

luxury. Louis Philippe, who had once been an admirer of Voltaire, fearing for his throne, changed his views with extraordinary celerity. He debased himself—in most cases ineffectively—in order to incline the Catholic Church in his favour. The Court took on the black colour of piety; in bourgeois circles a very real devoutness developed, founded on fear of the Fourth Estate. Hypocrisy, supported by reactionary literature, began to spread in upper middle-class circles. Everything was permitted. All that was required was that immorality and vice should be concealed. The mediation of influential men saved millionaire swindlers in the name of Christian charity, but the leaders of public opinion were exercised in passing sentence on a hungry lad who had stolen a loaf of bread. Formerly a priest who gave up his orders was not deprived of the respect of society, provided his action was not due to mercenary motives; now mere divorce was regarded as an outrageous scandal.

"The path of the golden mean," the phrase dropped by Louis Philippe, became the symbol of his authority, without splendour and without dignity, the symbol of his progress on the halter held by the stock-exchange speculators.

Beyle clearly realized that now, after the events which had occurred, the end of the novel *Le Rouge et le Noir* would have been quite different. Officers of his acquaintance told him with indignation that attempts had been made to turn their detachments, appointed to defend the French frontiers, into punitive expeditions against the striking workers.

"Would any decent officer consent to take part in that?" Beyle was asked by his friends.

"It appears that a good number of disreputable officers have been found," was the retort he met with in not a few cases.

Beyle decided to delay the delivery of his *Chasseur Vert* to Levavasaur after reading the shorthand notes given to him by Mareste of Blanqui's speech at his trial in connection with a Communist conspiracy. An entirely new France had spoken. In reply to the question of the President of the Tribunal: "What is your occupation?" Blanqui answered: "I am a proletarian." "That is not a profession," said the judge. "How is it not a profession?" exclaimed Blanqui. "Thirty million Frenchmen living by their labour and deprived of political rights are engaged in it!"

Having read this, Beyle glanced at the writing-table. A letter had long been lying there, brought in by some unknown person. The postage stamp was of French India, the post mark of last year. The handwriting was unfamiliar. Beyle tore open the envelope. The letter was signed: "ton Victor." He jumped up and asked who had brought the letter. This morning—the postman. It was from his old friend Victor Jacquemont. It was written from Kashmir, and enclosed with the letter was the story of Félicie Féline, a Parisian bourgeoisie. Jacquemont had once told it to Beyle who was so delighted that he asked him to write it down for a second edition of *De l'Amour*, if there should be a demand for it. Eight months ago Beyle had learnt from the newspapers of Victor Jacquemont's death in India. The dead wrote to the living.

Good-natured, kind-hearted and business-like Romain Colomb had managed to get judgment for six thousand francs for the pirated Brussels edition of *Le Rouge et le Noir*. Hence there was no need to be in a hurry about Levavasaur's proposal.

In fact, *Le Chasseur Vert* could not be allowed to go in its present form. Beyle's actual impressions of the living, real France, his contact with "bad society," with which his aristocratic friends reproached him, showed that all



the starting points of the novel were false. But how was he to depict the system of *provocation*, the struggle of the five police forces, the legitimism of the Carlists, the Ministries gambling on the stock-exchange and losing France, the starving workers against whom they were sending Napoleon's Generals, making a laughing-stock of both sides. How was he to depict the ingenious bribery and the stifling of opposition among the deputies by profitable jobs and bribes, how was he to depict all this, if under the pretext of enriching the country factories and works were being built, whose purpose was by no means the equal distribution of the products among the people, but the shameless profit of one person or a group of shareholders? How was he to describe the fact that the most important phenomena were being concealed from the light and understanding, and the minds of the French were being artificially directed by a lying Press to seek for other causes of phenomena and events?

Beyle's leave passed quickly without giving him any repose from his impressions of Civita Vecchia or even awakening in him a longing for the view of the sea from the high cliff on which the Consul's house stood. December came. Beyle packed his trunks. The bound volume of *Le Chasseur Vert* was put at the bottom. Levavasseur frowned when he was informed of the plot.

"Nothing is said about the King and too much about the Ministers for the book to find readers. The story is not entertaining. There are few adventures. I am afraid it won't be a success."

"Nothing is said about the King . . . that is well said," thought Beyle. "When Madame de Staël was exiled from Paris by Napoleon, she printed her *Corinne* in Paris. Friends brought her the proofs, and the printing-press triumphantly printed ten thousand copies. In the early morning ten gendarmes of Napoleon entered the printing-works, locked themselves in with the Prefect of Police and by four o'clock in the afternoon the ten thousand copies were reduced to pulp. 'Your book is remarkable,' wrote the Minister of Police to Madame de Staël, 'but untimely: there is not a word in it about the Emperor.'"

"But there is a difference between that and this, damn it!" said Beyle furiously, as he paced up and down the room.

The porter said that an unknown man had asked for Monsieur Beyle every day at the same hour and, on hearing that he was at home, went away.

Beyle recalled how Byron had said in Milan in 1816 on his arrival from Geneva that all the lorgnettes from the other shore were turned on him with their dirty glasses; they spied on his evening walks and although he had not been there more than a week, they said that all the maidservants in the rue Basse were in the family way from him.

Beyle ascertained from the porter when the mail-coach left for Orleans. Next day, having donned an overcoat with a big cape and a fur collar, a tall hat with a heavy nap and a black silk band and buttoned up his green chamois gloves, he heard once again the horn of the mail-coach. The weather was cold. Gusts of cold wind blew in at the old rattling windows and thin trickles of rain seeped through. When they reached the banks of the Loire and the road went past willow and birch, past sand banks and black reeds, the copper colour of the water and the greenish sky foretold a change of weather. A day later the sun peeped out. In a small eating-house, while waiting for luncheon he had ordered, Beyle found an old newspaper of 20th June, 1832, which reported that Monsieur Mérimée, head of the chancellery of Count d'Argout's Ministry of Commerce, had given instructions to raise the pension of Rouget de Lisle to one thousand francs.

The result of the trip to Paris was *Chroniques Romaines*, which nobody wanted. The *Chasseur Vert* would not be passed by the censor. "Let us go to Rome," thought Beyle, "even if they put one into prison for reading the Decameron. But I must beware of Civita Vecchia, otherwise it may happen that one fine day I shall catch myself saying: 'I think it is going to be a beautiful morning.'" It might even come to that! He went over to the mirror. He had not once looked at himself during the whole of the journey. He saw a thin, vivid face, not at all tired. He had lost weight during the trip to Paris and felt lighter and better, but apart from any weight he might have lost as a result of the fatigue of the journey, the cold weather and the French winter, there was a certain sharpening of the features, which had so pleased Gagnon in the days of the Russian campaign. In Lyons the coach station was on the banks of the Rhône. Urchins took Beyle's bag, his trunk of books was placed on a two-wheeled trolley, and the procession moved off to the landing-stage of the steamer. On the gangway a gust of wind blew the top-hat off his head. Bad weather was beginning again. There were red clouds towards evening. The rays of the setting sun cast shimmering purple patches on the surface of the river which were broken up by the wind. In the cabin were a lady in a pink hat and a young man with a reddish-brown beard, wearing a huge grey top-hat and a blue frock-coat. Leaning crosslegged against the table, he was gazing out of the window. The lady smiled and held out her hand. The young man turned round. They were George Sand and de Musset.

"We are going to your territory, Monsieur Beyle."

"Why are you going by sea?" said Beyle, struggling with the temptation to ask about *Mérimée*.

"We are afraid of the long journey by diligence."

Beyle smiled and once again caught himself thinking that he would like to solve aloud this fear of travelling in a diligence. "You are on a wedding trip, my friends," he thought. "What can be better than a steamer with a cabin, instead of a mail-coach and tiresome neighbours? Well, so as not to be in your way, I will go by coach." He firmly resolved to leave them at Avignon.

De Musset was tired, but gay. In accordance with his habit he opened bottle after bottle of light white wine. His cheeks were flushed, his eyes sparkled, but the dark circles under his eyes showed that his intimacy with this woman was not without its effect on his strength.

"Dear Beyle, you are a Consul, a real Consul of a Roman province. At the same time you are the father of Romanticism. You are the most classic thing we have."

"If you knew what a cursed hole my Roman province is you would at least express your sympathy for me," said Beyle. "You don't know what an incredible stench comes from the rotting seaweed."

"Take a boat and go farther away from the shore," said George Sand.

"I suspect that you will soon do that, but bear in mind that the boats in which you will take your seats are black Venetian gondolas, full of fleas which will bite you on a moon-lit night in Venice, and the smugglers' boats at Chioggia always smell of olive oil and rotten rope. Don't wear muslin, otherwise all sorts of human smells will come from you even after a year."

"Phew, how malicious you are! It seems to me you are saying all this on purpose."

"You don't want to listen to the practical advice of an old traveller," said Beyle. "In that case I won't say anything."

To every rapturous phrase that George Sand uttered Beyle replied with irony and backed it up with serious practical information describing Italy as a quite unattractive country. "This woman wants to make Italy a bed for her love games," thought Beyle. "Poor de Musset, it seems, is seriously in love. He has lost his head and does not realize that this trip will cost him dear. George Sand is the continuation of Madame de Staël. If she was repulsive and stupid, this one is repulsive and brazen. Both of them are false enough. Both create illusions they do not live by, but impose them on others. Both are absolutely devoid of logic, especially George Sand, who is impelled to write novels by a superfluity of physical energy and not by disinterested love of the beautiful."

Beyle went out of the cabin. He sat down on a coil of rope in the stern and read a report of the French Consul in Florence which he had got from the Ministry. The engineer-mathematician Fossomboni, who had taken over authority in Florence, had appointed ex-revolutionaries to the service, who, expiating the sins of their youth, were trying to instal the Austrian system of detection and espionage. Beyle knew of this from Vieusseux, but the reports of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs painted a completely different picture. It would have to be corrected without offending or putting anyone in the wrong. This was another argument in favour of choosing the land route to Civita Vecchia so as not to miss Florence.

De Musset was drawing caricatures of his fellow-travellers as they approached Avignon. Just before sunset the water began to get agitated. The steamer rocked so much that it succeeded with difficulty after four attempts in reaching the landing-stage at Pont du Saint Esprit. Beyle said good-bye to his companions and went on shore. The mail-coach did not leave till the following day. The coach station was on the other side of the river. It was late. Having found a wayside inn on the advice of the porter, Beyle ordered supper. He had difficulty in getting a separate room and had hardly begun to have supper, when de Musset entered the room with a timid air.

"Mon Dieu, how glad I am!" he exclaimed. "They told me that some important person had engaged the best room in the 'hotel.'"

Beyle coughed.

"Go and tell them it is not so."

"No, Beyle, joking apart, can you tell me if we could rest in this room? Everything is full up. They are driving the flocks to the north, the shepherds and drovers have taken all the lower part. I don't know at all how I am going to fix things up for Aurora."

"But of course, bring her here," said Beyle. "Only on one condition—that you don't let my presence interfere with your supper."

All three had supper together.

The mixed wines intoxicated de Musset. At first he recited poetry with great verve, then a sombre mood took possession of him and he began declaiming in a melancholy doomladen strain how every sunny day obscures the dark sky of fate, that against universal darkness even the sun is powerless.

Beyle looked at him with rising irritation.

"You will kill yourself with such sentiments," he said. "I know their source."

George Sand looked at him in horror. Beyle gave her a defiant look in reply. De Musset seemed to be thoroughly exhausted. He shouted at Beyle: "You can create fantasies and compose, you have the facts, you are a man of

happiness, like Sulla you can say of yourself: 'I am Felix and Faustus, I am fortunate and the minion of fortune.' You saw the rise and decline of the Empire, you knew Napoleon. You sat with him as we are sitting with you now."

George Sand took hold of him by the sleeve and made him sit down in the armchair. De Musset did not notice her. His red head dropped on his breast, tears came into his reddened eyes. He shouted hoarsely: "During the wars of the Empire, when husbands and brothers were fighting in Germany, our mothers, worn out by sorrow and fear, brought into the world whole generations of neurotic individuals. Conceived in the intervals between the battles, brought up in schools to the sound of drums, tens of thousands of children looked at one another, feeling the weakness of their undernourished muscles. From time to time their blood-stained fathers appeared, hugged their children to their glittering breasts, picked them up in their wounded arms, then put them down and mounted their horses again."

De Musset's head drooped once again on to his breast. His shoulders shuddered.

"Never before were so many sleepless nights spent," he continued, "never did such crowds of desolate mothers roam about the gates of the towns and the coach stations."

He jumped up and began to pace up and down the room. "You built that world," he shouted at Beyle, "you saw it with your own eyes, you knew where you were going, you were carried away by the impulse of the heroic years!"

"We not only saw, but we knew how to see," retorted Beyle.

"We had nothing to look at," said de Musset. "Our youth, loaded with all sorts of cares, was housed in the ruins of a shattered world. We children were drops of the hot blood that had watered the soil. We were born when war was at its height. For fifteen years we dreamed of the snowy plains of Moscow and of the scorching sun of the land of the pyramids. Now we look at the earth, the streets, the roads, the stormy Rhône—everywhere is empty, and one hears only the church bells of our France. . . . When children ask about glory, the reply they receive is: 'Go to church.' When children think about the heroic deeds of life, they are told: 'Become priests.' When children grow up and talk about love, energy and creative life, they are given the same reply: 'Build monasteries.' But we respond to this by giving up our life to drunken enjoyment and reckless love. Let everything perish . . . and at the bottom of love is deception."

"You are drunk, Alfred," whispered George Sand.

De Musset gulped down a glass of wine and said no more.

There was an awkward silence. Beyle was angry. He felt something like fury. The truth of de Musset's words was mixed with a despair that went beyond the bounds of mere affectation. Beyle saw quite plainly that through the drunken tears appeared the great sorrow of a real poet. He had not read his short stories and now he was almost glad of the fact. He firmly resolved not to read a single line of de Musset. After drinking several glasses of wine at a gulp, he himself felt slightly tipsy. He began once again to make fun of George Sand's dreams about Italy, as though he feared she might outrage his love of that country with some poetic rapture. Then all of a sudden he asked her: "Are there many young men with such moods in Paris?"

"There are no young men like de Musset at all, but in various classes there are a good many young men who are acquainted with sorrow. I know a young man from the working class—the carpenter Perdiguier. He found within himself

the strength to give up drinking. He has been going from town to town, from department to department for the past six years. The internal contradictions, which tortured him after a personal failure, disappeared. The purpose of his travels is to amalgamate all the *compagnonnages* and *devoirs* into one vast workers' union."

"What, has the trade union bill been passed?" asked Beyle.

"No," replied George Sand. "Even the *compagnonnages* are forbidden, but at present the police connive at it."

"So perhaps these legal unions are permitted by the Government in order to keep a watch on them?" asked Beyle.

"How? Is that possible?"

"I don't trust your fellow-traveller," said Beyle.

"And I have great confidence in him," insisted George Sand. "He is a representative of the new France." And passing a glass of wine to Beyle, she said: "To the new France!"

"To the preservation of de Musset's health!" said Beyle.

De Musset opened his eyes and took up his glass again. He told a questionable story, Beyle capped it and both of them began to laugh. There followed a stream of anecdotes, gossip and obscenities, which made George Sand frown. She looked so sincere that for a while Beyle was on the point of believing her, but de Musset, who was well aware that she could let her tongue go when she liked, continued without any scruple. Beyle rose and went up to de Musset with an empty glass.

"Your glass," said de Musset and called the waitress.

Beyle remembered the words of an Italian ditty and beat time with his foot, holding the empty glass in his hand. When the waitress came in, she was astonished. The important official personage was dancing in his fur boots. His broad cloak with a cape was hanging down from one shoulder, a green glove lay on the floor, and his black top-hat was pushed jauntily to the back of his head.

The last page of the album was empty. De Musset, who could hardly see the lines he was drawing, hastily sketched Beyle's portrait in pencil.

Late in the night, suffering agonies of indigestion from the wine he had drunk, Beyle tossed about on the wooden bench. Harsh voices could be heard through the wall. A woman said: "While everybody is asleep, go up into the attic. The steamer for the north goes to-morrow, they have promised to conceal you. I can't go on living like this. My heart is being torn to pieces. I shan't have any rest till you get to Michelangelo."

A harsh bass voice replied to her: "Anxiety is the same everywhere, auntie. Michelangelo is not far from prison either. We shall all end by 'marrying the widow.' The worst of it is that scoundrel Grisel is just like his father. He is now a gendarme at Lyons and boasted the other day: 'My father executed Babeuf and seventy-five others with him, and I'll lead to the gallows—I'll marry to the widow,' was what he said—'Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Michelangelo Buonarrotti and all the six hundred and fifty.' I suggested wiping out Grisel, but in the *compagnonnage* they say: 'Wait a bit!'"

Beyle turned over and coughed loudly. The voices ceased. "France is on a volcano—the underground lava is seething, unless I am suffering from hallucinations." The first French Communist, executed in 1797, the publisher of *L'Ami du Peuple*, had risen again like a menacing spectre before France in the shape of the Fourth Estate.

On waking at five in the morning, Beyle gathered together his things and shivering from the chill of the night, took his seat in the half-dark coach.

## CHAPTER FORTY-SEVEN

A. I. TURGENEV HAD A MEETING WITH HIS BROTHER IN SWITZERLAND. ON 14TH October, 1833, Nikolai Turgejev was married to Clara, the daughter of the Carbonaro Gaetan Viaris, and went away with her. Alexander wrote in his diary:

"Sunday. Geneva. My brother and Clara are going away. I ordered the carriage to halt at the frontier stone; I saw him, they alighted from the carriage. My brother came up to me affectionately, took me by the arm and said a few words to me with a feeling I had not noticed in him before: 'How is it we are not together, but anyway . . . I owe all this to you. . . . You have done all this . . .' or something like that. He wanted to talk about my trip to Russia, which is making him anxious. I changed the subject. My feelings were not easy to explain. We embraced each other, shook hands, and looked again at the stone which separated us. He got into the carriage . . .

". . . Went on foot after the carriage. On 14th October, 1833, at seven o'clock in the morning, I finished this book with renewed life. I shall begin another, a green one again, bought here. Where shall I finish it? Once again I ask this of myself or of fate. *The hidden life is not yet finished.* But the fate of my brother no longer burdens it. I look on the future with confidence, for I see in it the clear, bright image of Clara for my brother. . . ."

*A. I. Turgenev to his brother Nikolai.*

"Rome, 16th December, 1833. No. 12. Well, here I am in Rome again. This is already the fourth time that I have come here. Please go and see the Cuviers and tell them that I am very grateful for their kind letter, that I have never forgotten their friendship and that I always remember with gratitude the soirées at their house, but that *I must not write to them from Russia.* Madame Cuvier writes to me that Beyle-Stendhal has been in Paris and is returning to Rome. If he is still with you look him up and send something by him; for instance, Chénier's new book or a waistcoat, the smartest to be had."

In St. Petersburg, Sobolevski together with Maltsev, the secretary of the late Griboyedov, planned to build a textile factory. He was lucky. He put up the Samsonov factory in the Vyborg district. His social importance was considerably increased.

There had just been a shower of rain, which failed to freshen the earth. In spite of the fact that it was December, it was hot in the town. Once again the ponderous buildings of Civita Vecchia spread out before Beyle. The narrow winding streets, the principal piazza of the town. In the Piazza San Francesco a customs officer was smoking a pipe filled with smuggled tobacco. Now the port commissioner Romanelli, the biggest rogue in the town, said "how d'ye do" with a mocking air. Here at last was the Consul's apartment with its appalling furniture, all that he could manage to get. Huge bookcases, two chests of drawers, a writing-table and a couple of desks. In a simple bronze frame on

the wall hung a portrait of la Pasta, whom he had heard for the last time in *Tancredi*, and had again been intoxicated by her wonderful voice. On the opposite wall was a portrait of Helvétius. In the yard the Consul's equipage was being unharnessed. Two Italians, swearing and stumbling, carried the trunks; the iron clasps creaked, the big lock fell off. The first thing to be done was to lock up the manuscripts in the table drawer. Ought the trunk with the books to be unsealed? No, it must be forwarded straight to Rome. In Rome he had lived until his leave at the house of the Swiss Abraham Constantin in the little street Via dei Barbieri. At Constantin's there was a vacant room on the second floor with a bed, a leather armchair, a small table and a trunk of books in the corner. This was Beyle's secret refuge, known only to a few friends. Thither came Turgenev and Sobolevski. From there all three would go out to take coffee at the "Antico caffè greco," where Turgenev once pointed out a tall, sharp-nosed man with long hair and a face the colour of earth. This was Gogol, a writer of Ukrainian stories. Beyle's place of residence was suddenly discovered in some unknown way. It simply happened that one fine day Lysimaque brought a dispatch to Constantin's apartment with a free and easy air. This was the reason why on his return from Paris after his leave Beyle did not wish to stay at Constantin's. Let the dear Swiss go on painting on porcelain the portraits of Russian beauties whom Beyle introduced to him at Turgenev's request. Turgenev had given Constantin an order for a miniature of Madame Potocka.

In the morning the trunk was sent to the Hotel Cesari in the Via dei Pietra, where Turgenev was staying. Beyle followed it. Three days later he went to see the Ambassador at his reception hour. Latour-Maubourg in no way resembled Saint-Aulaire. Saint-Aulaire, a man of the world who kept a salon, was himself a writer and historian and at the same time a cautious and efficient official. He had an unfortunate aristocratic past and did not count very much on the confidence of the July Government. He saw through Beyle and at the bottom of his heart considered that this Jacobin knew Italian life and political intrigues much better than the French Ambassador. Monsieur Saint-Aulaire was inexorable every time Beyle asked permission to spend another week in Rome. Beyle would have to have a frank talk with Latour-Maubourg. The lean, wrinkled man greeted Beyle without any cordiality. Beyle began a long speech. The Ambassador calmly and drily interrupted him.

"Why do you burden yourself with book-keeping, ships' logs and travellers' passports? You have an assistant for that. Live where you please, and in the event of difficulties come and see me in the mornings, I will give you directions."

The result surpassed Beyle's expectations. Having paid Cesari a month in advance, Beyle did not trouble any more about Civita Vecchia. Twice a week the mail-coach took packets to Lysimaque and twice a week brought Beyle Lysimaque's replies and the papers which required to be dealt with by the Consul. Latour-Maubourg was true to his word. He was well aware of the state of the Consulate at Civita Vecchia and willingly confirmed Beyle's instructions with his signature. At Cesari's it turned out to be too noisy. In the Piazza di Minerva there is an amusing baroque monument—a marble elephant, thick, short, with its trunk stubbornly lowered and its immense forehead pushed forward. On its back is erected a tall, pointed marble obelisk, which in conjunction with the marble elephant produces a strange effect. On the way from this elephant to the Pantheon rises a clumsy building with jutting stone window-frames and massive walls. Beyle moved into this house.

On rising in the morning, he saw from the window young Sabine peasant women with particoloured corsages above their dress, with large baskets of flowers, vegetables and market wares on their heads. Papal gendarmes and Swiss halberdiers in medieval red and yellow jerkins with puffed sleeves and ancient swords on their hips pestered the girls with coarse jokes. Files of monks and priests went by on their way to the Corso, seminarists in black, green, blue and bright red cassocks walked to the seminary by the bridge of Sant' Angelo. From time to time there would pass on a donkey, scattering the pedestrians, yawning and showing his rotten teeth, one of the Princes of the Church in a red gown and red hat. The gendarmes straightened themselves up and touched the brim of their hats in salute.

Lysimaque was displeased because all the packets went through the Embassy, but at the same time Beyle's absence freed his hands. The factual Consul, he made the travellers forget about Monsieur Beyle, but when they grumbled because it cost fifty scudi for a visa, Lysimaque would nod his head sympathetically, then shrug his shoulders with a gloomy look and say: "The fees were drawn up by Monsieur Beyle. Have a talk with him." And every time the travellers went away with a feeling of resentment against the elusive Monsieur Beyle, who was never visible and caused them so much bother in spite of the efforts of his courteous and obliging assistant to smooth things out. Anyway, this Beyle was a great fidget; they had just met him in the Via delle Botteghe Oscure, and yesterday they had seen him in the Via Toledo at Naples. "That restless Frenchman has started flitting about again," said the Cardinal who was in charge of the police. "Does he skip from Naples to Rome on wings?"

The deceased Courier had once introduced Beyle in Rome to a ravishing beauty, who was a friend of his. The acquaintance continued in spite of the fact that this marvellous girl had now become Princess Caetani. In the Via delle Botteghe Oscure, a majestic and gloomy street, which seemed to have been created for heavy battles and long sieges, among the houses with windows protected by iron grills and amid the decaying mansions of aristocratic but impoverished Romans, rose the façade of a palace, the symbol of power and glory, belonging to Prince Filippo Caetani and his wife. How often, forgetting that he was fifty, Beyle would fly like an arrow up the steps to the upper marble landing of the palace past the porter in his particoloured attire, who smiled at the sight of everybody's friend, Signor Beyle! How often little Don Filippo would clasp the thick neck of this Frenchman with his little hands, clamber up on to his shoulders and tug at his side-whiskers. The circumstances were not at all like those in Paris. Beyle was a welcome visitor at any hour and almost master of the house. He had long ceased to be a Frenchman. He was a real Milanese, with the gay, witty Milanese manner of speaking Italian, with Milanese ideas, the sentiments of a Lombard and the eternal, never-fading image of *Métilde Visconti*. Nobody knew about that in Paris, nobody knew about it in Rome, just as nobody would know about the beautiful friendship of a woman's heart which Judith Gaulthier had given him.

Don Michele and Don Filippo Caetani would go on with their conversation when Beyle came in, greeting him and carrying on without interruption as though he were one of the family. Later on young Count Giuseppe Cini and his wife would arrive. Young, beautiful and coquettish, she delighted in everything, in her twenty-year-old self, her success, her handsome husband Count Giuseppe and the company of Beyle.



At Genzano, where the Caetani, the Cini, the so-called Countess Sandre and six or seven other families went for the summer, they played games with the children under the trees in the garden, and many a time the old oaks of Genzano were witnesses of how the French Consul with his eyes blindfolded and with outstretched hands cautiously moved about the little yard amid the cries and laughter of those who were playing at blind man's buff.

Now at last he seizes, so he thinks, young Don Filippo by the waist and shouts: "Here he is, I recognize him!" But on lifting him up, he suddenly hears the rustle of silk petticoats and feels somebody's hands tear the bandage from his eyes: the blushing countess is set down on the ground; delighted with her little trick, she re-arranges her hair.

*Diary of A. I. Turgenev.*

"11th January, 1834. Read the fifteenth canto, one of the most beautiful in Dante's *Paradiso*. It contains his genealogy related to his ancestor Cacciaguida and a description of the manners of Florence in the days of his ancestor, and more about the smile of Beatrice:

*Chè dentro agli occhi suoi ardeva un riso.*

"Wrote to brother. No. 16. Met Beyle-Stendhal, who has arrived from Paris. Talked about Cuvier and Mérimée. At Countess Cini's met Cardinal Pacca, author of biographical notes. Went with Count Shuvalov to Villa Milis, formerly Villa Palatina. Spent the evening at Count Shuvalov's with Beyle and Skaryatin. Had a talk with Schilling's sister and with Count Rzewusski.

"13th January. Ball at Klevtsov's.

"Beyle-Stendhal was with me for more than an hour. He told me a lot about France. The Catholic religion is not reviving. In Paris under Napoleon there were forty-five thousand visitors every year. Under the Bourbons there were less. Now there are as many again, because from resentment and boredom the faubourg St. Germain has started to go to church again instead of going to dance at the King's. In the provinces the curés do harm to the parishes in which the people hate the Jesuits, and the townsmen love their revolution of 1830, whereas the priests hate it. Hence a general aversion to the Church among the common people. The Saint-Simonists have saved themselves from ridicule only on account of the persecution by the Government which has begun. D'Argout and Barthe are brutes—they are persecuting people. Guizot is clever, and the schools of his institutions are excellent. He does not have much recourse to the collaboration of Cousin and Villmain lest the latter should attribute their own actions to him. They have already fallen in people's opinion as candidates. Mignet went to Thiers' estate in Spain, but did not observe or bring back anything useful. Renoir does whatever he is asked. Thiers alone is superior to the whole Ministry, and the Ministry is on a level with the people, but Thiers does what he will with the Chamber and asks for a sum to complete the construction of only two monuments: the Arc de Triomphe and the Arc de la Madeleine. They will not build any new ones, for he argues wisely that it is time to curtail the taxes from the poor people of France for the maintenance of the magnificence of Paris. Question: ought one to finish what was begun? Thiers decided in the affirmative. What about Chateaubriand? Chateaubriand has fallen. And Madame Récamier? He waved his hand. She still has influence. Judge for yourself: Paris is a paradise for old women. Broglio does not see clearly and makes old doctrinaire remarks.

Anyway, Thiers is superior to him. Bear in mind that at present *the French have only one love—the Poles*. They send for them and give them pensions.

"Is there any possibility of the Bourbons coming back ?

"It is impossible for a long time.

"4th February. Walking along the Corso, I met the Pope, who was riding in a gilded coach with eight seats. He was alone. He was followed by a detachment of horse and gendarmes. . . . Even the French Kings have ceased to ride like that, with such an escort. Only criminals are escorted like that.

"*Met Beyle in a café*. Chatted with him and Prince Viazemski. Told him of the contents of a letter of Viazemski's about him: 'It is not for nothing that fate has caused you to meet Stendhal, the author of *Le Rouge et le Noir*, the greatest novel of our age. You yourself with your wandering and love of the beautiful resemble this remarkable author.'

"I left the café together with Beyle. He told me about the Cesarini trial and about literature. He talked about a volume of André Chénier's posthumous works, which he regards as forgeries and attributes them to Destutt de Tracy. We sauntered along the Corso, which was littered with the chalk and flowers of the carnival procession that came along. Beyle stopped me opposite the house of the banker Prince Torloni. 'In that palace,' said Beyle, 'there was not long ago a church. It is the only church in Rome to be turned into a private dwelling, and what Pope Pius VI was unable to do for his nephew Braschi, who hankered after this house, has now been done by a banker for money.'

"I called on Countess Guriev. Met Countess Borghese and her daughter Montemar. I went up to them, said a few conciliatory words to the mother and shook her hand, and she promised to pelt me with confetti. I decided to go to her ball to-day. In the evening I received a note from Beyle. Read Prosper Mérimée's charming *La Double Méprise* at one sitting.

"8th February. Dined with Lanski. Orchestras played. Music delightful. Everybody sitting at the tables sang.

"The air was filled with music. They drank. Beyle-Stendhal sat down next to me. Ordered Aleatico. Chatted about many things and about the forthcoming ball at the Austrian Ambassador Lützen's. Afterwards went out on to the Corso. The carnival in full swing. Devils, advocates, gardeners, knights, masks, a wealth of colour and brightness, enormous streamers and floods of coloured confetti were rained down upon the pedestrians. Horse races. A great number of equipages. Masked people threw oranges at the windows of the upper storeys with a special little machine. Countess Caumont threw an Easter egg at me which broke on my frock-coat. Flour was scattered, and Beyle and I were made whiter than snow.

"18th February. Beyle sent me Ampère's book on China.

"Went to Klevtsov's house and to Bunsen's lecture."

On the days of the carnival, on saying good-bye to Turgenev, Beyle would turn each time from the Corso into the Piazza Navona. This was the finest place in the world. The houses of grey, almost unhewn stone formed a semi-circle. The piazza was paved with huge grey flag-stones. Fountains with tritons, nymphs, nereids and naiads of white marble gilded by time and green from the water, emitted broad jets of water which sparkled in the golden rays of the evening sun. Among the white marble figures that peopled the square and the cool fountains a monstrous figure stood out—a black marble triton joined to a white unpolished lump of the same material.

Countess Cini in a mask, which Beyle knew quite well as he had brought it himself from the villa of Horace Vernet, danced with Don Filippo. For the third day she looked at him so mockingly through the narrow slits of the mask, the breeze lifted the lace in such a way each time she made a turn and approached Beyle that he decided to come to an understanding with her. He spoke half jestingly, half seriously to Don Filippo. Countess Cini laughed and Beyle, having begun with a jest, ended by seriously pouring out his sorrows. He spoke of his utter loneliness, and said that fifteen years ago at the beginning of the century he might have been happier than now and his life would have shaped itself differently. "But that woman died the same year when your friend died," he said, turning to Caetani, "on the same day when Courier was killed." Don Filippo went away. Countess Cini took Beyle by the arm. Together they got into a carriage to drive to the Piazza Navona. While Beyle was helping his lady to step on to the footboard of the carriage, a voice was heard amid the noise and cries of the revelling throng:

"I know him. He is Baily or Begli, the deuce knows what his name is. Anyway, he's the man who wrote the life of Haydn, and brought out another book called *De l'Amour* this year.<sup>1</sup> He doesn't understand a thing about music."

This remark came from Berlioz, the composer. His companion muttered angrily: "I know that bear from Grenoble. He is a sort of Montagnard Hébert from the Dauphiné, a revolutionary, a Communist, an atheist, in general a combination of all the most delightful qualities."

"But how is it they keep him as a Consul?" asked Berlioz.

"It is better than keeping him in Paris," someone said.

"You hear how they abuse you?" said Countess Cini, as she drove off with Beyle.

The carnival came to an end and ordinary days began. A few unpleasant moments in the ordinary days would not have mattered, but it turned out otherwise for Beyle. Monsieur Molé was no longer Minister of Foreign Affairs. His place had been taken by the Secretary General the Duc de Broglie—Duc Broglio, as Turgenev called him. He was not at all well disposed towards Beyle as a writer; still less did he wish to tolerate Monsieur Stendhal as Consul. The Ambassador, shrugging his shoulders, handed Beyle a document: in 1832 the Ministry of Foreign Affairs had sent him a warning; in 1834 he received a real reprimand.

I have reason to think, sir, that in spite of the special warning which you received from my predecessor, a warning, following which you were to obey clause 35 of the order of 20th August, 1833, which referred to an uninterrupted sojourn at Civita Vecchia, you have continued to be frequently absent from that town. I am willing to close my eyes to this obstinate and long infringement of the order only in the event of its not being repeated. I advise you, sir, to carry this out, if you wish to retain the post entrusted to you by H.M. I have no possibility, by way of exception, of absolving you from this part of your obligations. . . .

"What dreadful language! It is the language of a drunken policeman. Whose signature is it? Who is this Monsieur Rini?" asked Beyle.

"Whoever he may be, the question does not rest with him," said Latour-

<sup>1</sup> This refers to a second edition of *De l'Amour* in Paris

Maubourg. "My permission remains in force, but I am not able to remove those of your 'friends' who secretly play you dirty tricks."

Beyle went to Civita Vecchia. In Rome he wrote *Brûlard*, in the mornings he made rapid notes for his *Confessions* and continued to write for the *Blue Portfolio*, in which already lay more than one chapter of some unknown novel dedicated to Italy. He would have to set about re-writing *Le Chasseur Vert*, or *Le Bois de Prémol*, or rather *Leuwen*, as he briefly called his novel.

Lysimaque met him with a crafty smile and fawning questions about his health. Beyle found on his table his memorandum on the government of Fossombroni in Florence, which had been returned, one of the best of his diplomatic documents, which he had spent so much time in composing. It had been returned as "absolutely unsuitable." Moreover, in looking through the notes in the margins, Beyle realized that he was being required to abstain from using the expressions "camarilla," "Papal espionage," "Austrian despotism," etc., as these expressions reflected on the French Government as well.

Together with this document there arrived a letter from Judith Gauthier. She wrote:

I have long felt some surprise that you have not yet fallen in love with me. I think that I ought to suit your heart. But do not worry, one can write like this only from a distance. I know too well that every time I seem to be inaccessible, you go away, but even when I am nice to you, you disappear. I will tell you frankly that it is a pleasure to talk to you, and to enjoy your mind is more precious to me than the short-lived madness of lovers who don't know what to do with themselves when the giddiness has passed.

The writing-table was locked. However, in turning over the last pages of *Leuwen* he noticed there were some blots made with a different kind of ink. Apparently somebody had been copying the parts dealing with the Government's organization of electoral bribes. "This bodes no good," thought Beyle. And resigning himself to a long sojourn at Civita Vecchia, he began working on his novel again. He tore out the most dangerous parts in regard to the censorship, then, having assured himself that there was nobody in the next room or in the corridor, he locked the door and took up a floor-board. He took out a small packet, from which he extracted a thin, slightly mouldy book entitled *Cryptography*. All through the evening and the night he tried to find a combination of cryptographic letters that would provide him with a secret code. Remembering his old mathematical studies and being well acquainted with the language of ciphers, by the following evening he was in possession of a complete code and prepared a key to it himself. His code was quite unlike the diplomatic codes of France, which were quite simple and accessible to any political spy. It was the result of the intensive research of a man of imagination and a trained mathematician.

In the course of the following month the work went smoothly. Beyle could already write and cipher with ease. He was no longer afraid of any Lysimaque opening his writing-tables. All his contempt for middle-class France, for the joint-stock company "Louis Philippe & Co.," was contained in the dry, neat formulas of the coded script. Then, without sparing himself in the wearisome night work, he wrote it all over again in the mirror. Even if some genius managed to find the key to the coding, the letters could only be deciphered in

the reverse order of the words. He felt that the end of his life might be absolutely poisoned and the realization of this danger filled him with a grim obstinacy. The same obstinacy showed itself also in the other work. The manuscripts which he had bought in Rome offered subjects for the most amazing stories. They contained the records of old Papal trials, stories of the Duchess of Pagliano and the Branciflore family. It provided the best proofs of Courier's opinion that the old Roman aristocracy had acquired fortunes by depravity. This was fully confirmed by the *Chronicles of the Farnese Family*, in which the Pope of Rome and a prostitute operate as allies in the business of gain and robbery. There was also the extremely interesting story of Vittoria Accoramboni, ending in an account of the siege of a private dwelling with the use of cannon and fortress artillery. The description was reminiscent of the siege of the house of Ciro Menotti, who was executed five years ago at Modena. Turgenev had seen his house and described the traces of destruction. Beyle would have to get in Rome the copies of the Modena records so that, when turning them into the story of Vittoria Accoramboni, he could borrow the necessary colours from actual life. There was also the story of the Cenci family. The monster's daughter was obliged to have recourse to patricide in order to save the whole family, but she herself did not get salvation from the most Christian clemency of the Pope. He would have to go to the Palazzo Barberini to see the portrait of Beatrice Cenci painted by Guido Reni. There was another thing he must do. Not being satisfied with the possession of these scrappy records, he would have to go with Turgenev to the monk Marini and ask permission at the Vatican to see the records of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. It would not be difficult to do this through the Ambassador.

The hot weather began. Again there was a scorching sun and *aria cattiva* in the evening. Again he felt a fever in the blood and his old rheumatic pains. He would have to make a break. Latour-Maubourg gave him permission to move to Monte Albano. At Ariccia he could breathe freely. The hills, which had taken the place of what had once upon a time been hissing volcanos, were covered with woods and lakes that filled the craters to the brims. Side by side with the oaks in the dense forests flowered everlasting wild roses, and thousands of nightingales formed an orchestra in the ilex groves slumbering in the moonlight.

These days at Monte Albano and Ariccia passed with incredible swiftness.

On meeting Beyle in the autumn, Turgenev asked what was the matter with his eyes. The lids were swollen and there were red streaks near the lashes. Reading twelve folios written in the terrible Latin handwriting of the sixteenth century had had its effect. Two copyists had refused to work. A third was invited, and soon all twelve volumes of material were ready. "Only Beyle could stand such hellish work in Rome," said Turgenev. Remembering the impressions of his early youth, Beyle thought: "In the salt mines of Hallein, where there are huge underground lakes of brine, the guides throw in dry, leafless branches of hornbeam, which in a few minutes become covered with salt crystals. The dry leafless branch jingles and reflects all the colours of the rainbow in the light of the torches. The dead, dry records of ancient trials, lawsuits and court actions of old Italy, merely by coming in touch with the brine of my imagination, may blaze with splendour and turn into bright, living pictures. We will work!"

Four small volumes of short stories were finished. He could now take a rest. In accordance with his habit of comparing everything with France, he

set about reading French material, memoirs of the time of Louis XIV, and made a trip to Ravenna and other towns in the north.

Lysimaque resigned and Beyle felt sorry for him. "What is going to become of that poor Greek?" he wondered. In the end the Ministry learned something from other sources than Lysimaque and Beyle. A proposal was made to Lysimaque that he should apologize to the Consul. "Relations are becoming tragi-comic," thought Beyle. "I am willing to pretend that a storm in a teacup is a tornado, but refuse to perish in it, if that is what they ask me to do. He wrote a request to be transferred to a consular post in any southern place in Spain. He wrote in great earnest and was quite prepared for the transfer. While waiting for a reply, he finished a chapter of *The Red and the White* and began to write the next, relating how the young man, who was unable to endure the stifling atmosphere of France, went off to Spain. He wanted to put this chapter into code, but did not find the code key in its usual place. He upset the ink-stand and overturned the writing-table as he ran about the room in a state of agitation, but the code was nowhere to be found. For two hours he sat in a half-dazed condition. Then with trembling hands he picked up the last bound volume, put it in a frame, copied several lines in the reverse order while looking in the mirror, and tried to decipher them. He did not succeed. Deadly pale, he paced up and down the room with big strides. He would be unable to read the work on which he had spent so much time. Again he tried to recreate the code. But each time some elusive turn of thought was missing. He did not recognize himself. He went hot and cold. He abandoned the attempt to read it and wanted to destroy what had been written. An unexpected weakness obliged him to lie down. He did not wake up until twenty-four hours later. When he opened his eyes the little Roman doctor Neppi, holding his watch in his left hand, was feeling his pulse with his right. Noticing that Beyle was about to speak, he shook his head.

"You have sunstroke," he said. "You must have a complete rest. It will pass without any trace."

But for a month Beyle felt an insuperable weakness.

The refusal of his request for a transfer to Spain did not occasion him any regret. Another packet, however, caused him surprise and resentment. This was a large dark green envelope of the Ministry of Education containing a diploma, signed by Louis Philippe, and the emblems of the Order of the Legion of Honour.

On the edge of the town grew six cypresses. Behind them was the little house of the carpenter Vidau. The handsome old man was the son of a French officer, had become poor and made his living as a carpenter. His wife, who had a very youthful face, grey hair and lips compressed with perpetual sorrow, did sewing and took in washing. She was helped by her daughter, a girl of twenty, slender as a stalk, blue-eyed and rather stern, like all people who look life straight in the face. Vidau made some book-shelves for Beyle and more than once blamed him for his passion for books. "Nothing spoils a man like books," he said. Beyle laughed and argued, but he liked the tone and simple confidence in his own rightness of the man who did not read books but embodied in life the rules of Rousseau's moral philosophy. The girl, in contrast to her father, was fond of reading. In her judgments there was something so direct, such a capacity for grasping correctly the essence of what she read that Beyle conversed with her more and more often whenever she came for books. He

felt sad in his moments of loneliness, and Mlle. Vidau looked at him with such eyes that she seemed to promise to drive away his sadness. One day after confidence and friendship had been established between them, he asked what Mademoiselle Vidau would say if he asked her to be his wife. She was not at all surprised and answered quite calmly: "I should be willing, if you would not renew your attempt to deprive me of my religion."

Vidau was a carpenter, Beyle a consul. The girl loved him, and he, apparently, was a quiet, steady man. But there were unpleasant rumours, and in any case Vidau would have to take advice, if not from his confessor, then from his brother, who was a monk in Piedmont. Beyle received neither a "yes" nor a "no," as the Vidaus were waiting for a letter from Piedmont. Lysimaque laughed up his sleeve: "That shows his real character. The aristocrat, the writer, Baron Stendhal, marrying the daughter of a washerwoman! Are there not lots of other women? No, he chooses one to conform to his Jacobin ideas. What better proof is there of his unreliability as a consul?"

From Piedmont it is but a step to the banks of the Isère. There, not far from Grenoble, there is a wonderful charterhouse. The Carthusian monks know everything, and the monk Vidau from Piedmont made inquiries through the monastery foxes of the Grenoble charterhouse. What he received surpassed his expectations. The carpenter Vidau at Civita Vecchia read out to his wife the following letter all the evening:

Which Beyle are you talking about? If it is the Beyle from Grenoble, he is an atheist and irreligious man, a blasphemer and a Jacobin, an enemy of God and the lawful authorities. You had better call him Stendhal. That is the new name of the anti-Christ.

The father and mother refused their blessing. The daughter wept and stopped seeing the Consul.

On 1st May, 1835, A. I. Turgenev wrote in his diary:

"During the night I heard cannon-fire. They were celebrating Spring, but Spring is a sad time for a sad heart. Visited Prince Viazemski. From there I went to the church of St. Louis, where the French are to-day celebrating Philippe's name-day: *music, singing, decorations. Beyle . . . in uniform. . . .*

"*A charming sight . . . and with a rose!* He listened attentively, turning his back to the altar and looking at the French."

## CHAPTER FORTY-EIGHT

THE CHIEF CLERK OF THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, IN PREPARING THE DRAFT of the refusal of Beyle's request for a transfer to Spain, found several paper squares covered with formulas, conventional signs and ciphers. It was the key composed by Beyle for deciphering the novel *Lucien Leuwen*, and on the back of one of the papers was the inscription: *Le Rouge et le Blanc*. The clerk put the papers into an envelope, sealed it and wrote on the outside: "To be kept till explained." The envelope lay for almost a hundred years until a young French savant read the novel *Le Rouge et le Blanc* and published it in full in 1929.

In those days Prosper Mérimée would listen while de Musset read his verses. They were stanzas addressed to Alfred's brother, Paul de Musset:

*Tu l'as vu, cet antique port  
Où, dans son grand langage mort,  
Le flot murmure,  
Où Stendhal, cet esprit charmant,  
Remplissait si dévotement  
Sa sinécure.*

A year previously Mérimée had finished a short story, *Les Ames du Purgatoire*, a fine treatment of the spiritual desolation of Don Juan. All the following year he travelled about France. He made trips of an official character to investigate the condition of the most important historical monuments of France, or carried out a dry, rather boring study of French literature. He had not written anything for a year, apart from letters to a beautiful Englishwoman, Jenny Dacquin, of Boulogne. In France there were spasmodic outbursts of indignation among the workers. But the newspapers said nothing. It was the quiet before the storm. Mérimée felt he was being stifled. His stories became drier and drier. And all of a sudden that evening he felt a refreshing wave of longing for his friend and wrote Beyle a letter, one of the tenderest he had ever written. He asked Beyle to come without fail, there was a host of things to talk about. Beyle replied in a mocking tone. It said that from information he had received Mérimée was travelling with a beautiful Spanish woman, and that while he, Beyle, was willing to come and congratulate him, he would rather not come to Paris. Mérimée wrote back saying that he was not travelling with a beautiful Spaniard, but if Beyle desired, he would acquaint him with a remarkable woman—Maria Manuela Montijo. Beyle and Mérimée made an appointment to meet at Laon.

Mérimée left Paris, sad and deeply affected, almost immediately after his father's funeral. Madame Anna Mérimée thought that it was another official trip and advised her son to decline, but on hearing what it was about, she agreed.

Beyle came up from the south, having buried a good many hopes. Judith Gauthier's letters had greatly disappointed him. He had asked her six months ago about the usual familiar, pleasant things, and reminded her of her little habits and touching partialities. She replied that she would be glad to see him, but she had forgotten part of the things he mentioned and she had dropped and ceased to care for many of her habits and attachments. More and more frequently Beyle caught himself thinking that he was entering a room, expecting to meet somebody, to hear somebody's voice. He was already inclined to think that the worst fate for him was freedom, which he had appreciated so much in his youth and with which he had been willing to part at Milan. His devoted friendship, chivalrous respect and self-effacing reverence for Métilde had obliged him for the first time to forget the word "freedom." Now this longing was without an object. On rising in the mornings at the inns or waking up at night from the jolting of the diligence, he found himself thinking of this. His nerves were so strained that one single indiscreet word on the part of a neighbour was enough to set his shoulders a-quiver from unuttered groans.

In this condition he needed Mérimée. He considered that a talk with this man, who for all his outward stiffness was so just, would sustain him in the difficult time through which he was passing. Having corresponded with Mérimée from Civita Vecchia, he knew that at eleven o'clock on the appointed day Mérimée would be under the huge chestnut-trees of the park at Laon. Just as he used to do when going to a rendezvous in his youth, he left the little hotel at



a quarter to eleven and was late. A tall man in a grey frock-coat, screwing up his eyes against the sun, came striding towards him. They embraced each other and for a long while were unable to speak. From the first words of his friend Beyle learned of the death of Léonor Mérimée. The bright peaceful day, the quiet little town in which nobody knew them, told the friends that they had been right to choose this spot. Here they spent the whole day, confiding to each other their troubles and secrets, the sadness of their utter inner loneliness. Beyle wept like a child. Mérimée turned away, walked away from the bench and came back again, without feeling the least awkwardness, but his nerves were also unstrung from the many unfamiliar emotions he was experiencing. The two men, who were so unlike each other in life and completed each other so well in their creative work, showed, when they met, an example of the most perfect human relations without a single gesture of pretence. They were not afraid to display excessive grief, they were not frightened of their own bashfulness. When Beyle suddenly covered his face with his hands, Mérimée suddenly remembered the magnificent work of the sculptor Jalley, who made a statue of Mirabeau. Mérimée gazed eagerly at those amazing hands, which had delighted the sculptor, who took casts of them for his Mirabeau. Beyle remembered and loved Métilde with devotion and self-oblivion, rendering an account to himself of every movement of the spirit. Mérimée would feel quite lost, if one fine day he became the husband of Jenny. Superficial passions and an insuperable physical attraction to vicious women had created in him the perpetual fear of the restless lover towards a calm and ordinary attachment to one person. His correspondence with the beautiful girl of Boulogne bore all the marks of a literary device, but it had already become a necessity. But in a moment of bitterness he wrote that any sempstress who sold herself in order to help her lover in prison was a thousand times better than Jenny Dacquín herself. And yet he was pleased that this woman understood him. In their four years of correspondence she had given him three quarters of an hour of her life. They met in the Louvre, where Mérimée saw her only once again, and parted in such a way that he could not find her address in Paris. He told of his successes without joy and remembered his failures without sorrow.

When he was back in Paris and in a calmer state of mind, Beyle thought of the great difference between his generation and the one that was born at the beginning of the century, when every year was equal to a hundred. At times he felt extremely low-spirited. He looked at himself as at a third person, and in this state, in the morning, he seemed to have greater facility in finding the words and turns of phrases to characterize the heroes of *Henri Brûlard*. He would pace up and down the room (in his apartment in the rue Favre) now concentrating, now gesticulating and uttering aloud the richest, clearest ideas, which he afterwards hastily transferred to paper. One day at one o'clock in the afternoon Mérimée called for him and took him to a Spanish family. Countess Maria Manuela Montijo and the two girls, Eugenia and Paquita, awaited with curiosity the arrival of Monsieur Beyle. Eugenia was just nine. After the grown-ups had talked among themselves for an hour, she quickly ensconced herself on Beyle's knees and asked him to tell her stories about the war.

"One day near Molodechno inspector of crown property Beyle was dozing in a kibitka when he was awakened by the sound of shooting on a steep bank beside the River Studianka. His helmet was not on his head, and as you know that hair grows terribly in the cold, this forelock appeared on his forehead. It is a sign of the Moscow campaign."

The girls listened reverently.

Or: "It happened at Castel Franco. The colonel of the 6th Regiment of Dragoons suddenly began to shout: 'Sound the alarm!' We snatched up our helmets and a second later were on our horses."

Beyle became a frequent visitor at the Montijos' house.

Whenever he was late in coming and the strict English governess was putting Eugenia and Paquita to bed, they would beg for permission to stay up. He would enter the girls' room looking serious and important, take out keepsakes of Vernet and lithographs of Gérard with a grim expression and begin a long account of the battle of Austerlitz.

Mérimée wrote a strange and, for him, unusual story; he called it *La Vénus d'Ille*. It was the same infinitely seductive and terrible Astræa—the goddess with slightly slanting eyes and ineffably beautiful and wicked features.

"You have not a good attitude towards woman, my friend. She is just as dangerous for you as the gypsy Esmeralda for the monk Hugo. I am sure it was you who put a ring on the finger of Venus and since then you are afraid there has been a betrothal. A time will come when you will begin to adore cats and dogs."

"You have already prophesied that to me several times," retorted Mérimée. "Evil tongues say that you already adore dogs. Two hounds enjoy great honour at your place in Civita Vecchia."

"That's because I shoot," said Beyle. "By the by, information came from that cursed Civita Vecchia to-day that the Vice-Consul Lysimaque had broken the lock of my room, rummaged in all the papers and stolen my linen. What a good thing it is that there is no Lysimaque here."

In a shop in the rue du Coq, Beyle saw the pictures and studies of the fashionable painter Dubufe. They were portraits of fashionable beauties, heavily made up and in slightly immodest toilettes. When Beyle expressed interest in the young artist, they showed him the painter's previous pictures and talked of him as a real master.

How did this man come to prostitute his art? The artist's story was so interesting and so characteristic of the prevailing social situation in Paris that at three o'clock in the morning Beyle dictated to a stenographer recommended by Prosper Mérimée part of a story called *Fedor, le Mari d'Argent*. The impoverishment of the aristocracy, the young people's lack of money, and the hard pressure of the bloated petty-bourgeois on the taste of the portrait-painter had caused a decline in talent and left a dead, barren attitude towards reality. The woman whom Michel Fedor encounters in his path is likewise the peculiar product of bourgeois-Catholic education. The convent boarding-schools of the 1830's were turning out women, who were either decent, pious and stupid, or else corrupt and perverted under the mask of piety. Here again, however, Beyle was completely unsuccessful with a French theme. He did not succeed in finishing *Fedor*, in the same way as he did not succeed in finishing *Leuwen*.

The Ministry put Beyle on half-pay. That was excellent! It gave him the possibility to prolong his leave without end and to begin a series of travels to Scotland and Ireland and to go for a short while to the Montijos in Madrid.

*Diary of A. I. Turgenev.*

"13th November, 1835. Went to a party at Gérard's. Humboldt, Letronne, Mérimée were there. Madame Ancelot was taken up with Humboldt: he had

spent the whole day with the King at Versailles, who began to complain against *Les Débats* for publishing articles and speeches, whereas everybody knew that the speeches were published with his consent. The King said that *Les Débats* was acting in an arbitrary manner. We stayed till after midnight listening to the jokes of Mérimée and Humboldt about Koreff and his marriage, and his service with Hardenberg and Hardenberg's wife.

"4th December. Went to a ball at the Myatlevs. All the Russians of Paris were there. I introduced Balzac to Lavalsch. \*

"26th December. Called on Madame Lagrenet. Chatted with a little bird, had tea in the drawing-room.

"17th February, 1836. Buonarotti dined with us. He told us all about Babeuf.

"9th March. Talked with Balzac at the Gérards' about Swedenborg, whom they rank higher than Jacob Boehme, Saint-Martin and the rest. Balzac also does not like Lamartine. 'It did not become him to be a Châtel,' he said.

"13th April. Read *I Sepolcri* by Ugo Foscolo.

"20th April. Buonarotti dined with us and stayed all the evening. Mérimée told stories at Miss Clarke's. Went from there to the Gérard's with Balzac. Talked about a good many things.

"24th April. About Rivarol. Egotism is an English word.

"15th May. At Davidov's with Mérimée."

Beginning in 1835, A. I. Turgenev had been contributing to Pushkin's journal *Sovremennik* a "Chronicle of Parisian Life." It was usually sent without a signature or with the letters "E.A.," i.e. "Eolova Arfa" (Aeolian Harp). The Russian censor ruthlessly mingled with the sounds of this Aeolian Harp the scratching of his blue pencil, and the results were sometimes sad in the extreme.

"1st June, 1836. Found a packet from Viazemski with letters of 8th May, letters from the Tolstoys, a copy of *The Government Inspector* and also *Sovremennik*, in which I eagerly looked for my correspondence and it took me a long time to get over my fury.

"Left a card on Philippe de Ségur. He is already in the country. Went to see Miss Clarke—she was already asleep. At Gérard's I had a talk with Beyle-Stendhal about Rome, the Gurievs and others. To Madame Ancelot and then home. Was furious about 'The Chronicle of a Russian' and was a long time getting over my fury.

"3rd June. Went to the Ancelots. Monsieur Ancelot was at the first performance of his eightieth play. Madame Ancelot was in a state of anxious expectation. All of a sudden about midnight the vanguard of friends appeared. The play was a success. After them came the author covered in perspiration. Talked with Madame Ancelot about the royalties from the play. Beyle, Mademoiselle Franklin. Accompanied the girl to her house.

"16th June. At four o'clock in the morning I was already at the frontier and at five o'clock I left France.

"21st January, 1837. Letter to brother No. 20. Gave the letter to D'Archiac and had luncheon with him. He read me a letter from A. Pushkin about the duel on 18th November, 1836. Gave two pounds of tea to Adelung. Afterwards called on Pushkin. . . . Talked about Chateaubriand and Goethe, about my letter from Simbirsk, about the steamship, the smoke of which is pleasant to our eyes.

"31st January. Sunday. Called on the Pushkins. The first words that struck me in reading the Psalms: I have not hid thy righteousness within my heart. Of course, that which Pushkin regarded as righteousness, i.e. his anger and the antagonism towards which it gave rise, he did not hide; he did not quell his heart and perished.

"6th February. At six o'clock in the morning we set out. I and a gendarme! The monastery again. They were still digging the grave.

"19th March. Met D'Arfès in a sledge with gendarmes. He was sitting cheerfully, in a forage-cap, cashiered and exiled abroad."

## CHAPTER FORTY-NINE

THE INDEFATIGABLE THIERS WAS GOVERNING FRANCE, PESTERING THE KING MORE and more with constant cares about fidelity to the constitution and with perpetual fear of a rising of the workers. Thiers embarrassed Louis Philippe, and his harping on the danger of a revolt of the workers seemed to the King to be intentional and unfounded. In 1836 the so-called Carlist wars broke out in Spain, and the French Minister wanted at all costs to help the Spanish bourgeois in their struggle against the aristocracy who were yearning for the return of the exiled King. On 25th August, 1836, his attempts to intervene having failed, Thiers resigned and declared that the aristocratic restorations, by striking a blow at the bourgeoisie, opened the way to revolts among the workers, and that "only the Catechism can save us from Socialism."

On 6th September, 1836, the ex-Minister of Foreign Affairs Molé, calm, well-educated, not a fanatic, who had taken part in Napoleon's campaigns, became Prime Minister. He was equally remote from the doctrinaire dryness of Guizot and the adventurist opportunism of Thiers. Beyle said laughingly that this appointment had been for his benefit, as he was on excellent terms with Molé. He was given permanent leave on half-pay, left for Paris and set about realizing his long-standing plan of making use of the old Italian chronicles. In 1837 he published in the *Revue des deux mondes*, *L'histoire de Vittoria Accoramboni* and *Les Cenci*, as well as an account of the archæological works in Etruria under the title of *Les Tombeaux de Corneto*. This year he made another attempt to go back to *Leuwen*, but wrote only one episode which had its origin in a talk with Sobolevski on the death of Pushkin. It tells how seven Guards officers challenge to a duel a literary man who is objectionable to the Government, in order to kill him "in a lawful manner."

A. I. Turgenev was in Paris again. He wrote in his diary on 27th January, 1838, sending these pages to P. A. Viazemski: "Paris. Midnight. I returned from Lamartine, but found hardly anything new on his table. I consulted with him and his wife as to what to send to you. He was unable to think of anything and both of them referred me to the biographical reminiscences of Andrian. The author himself was present—the companion of Pellico, Confalonieri and Beyle, who was known to the Italian Carbonari. I remember I have already described Andrian to you. He assures me that his book will be allowed into Russia. I intend to send it through E.F.M. Andrian told me that as a foreigner having no connections with Austria and having nothing to fear on account of anyone, he could write and did in fact write without fear either for himself or for others, although perhaps not with complete sincerity."

During these days Beyle did not see Turgenev. He was making his fourth

and last visit to England. He spent the evenings with Theodore Hook and Sutton-Sharpe at the Athenaeum club in London, and, sitting in a railway coach for the first time in his life, pretended that the movement of the wheels along the rails did not surprise him in the least. He read the proofs of *La Duchesse de Palliano*, one of the most cruel Italian stories, for the *Revue des Deux Mondes*.

He returned from the trip feeling better and stronger. The absence of the pressure of officialdom and the intrigues of Lysimaque, the freedom to move about and the great amount of writing he did restored his spirits. In his letters to Mérimée he refers to his youthful ardour with regard to women as the result of his long neglect of them. After visiting the highlands of Scotland, the desolate coasts of Ireland, and his favourite spots at Richmond and Windsor, he quite easily put up with Paris, for which he had always been an observant stranger, a perpetual wanderer, intoxicated with his own mind and ability to put a spark to life everywhere.

The booksellers of Paris and the second-hand booksellers at the Odéon and along the quays of the Seine saw once again those magnificent hands with the lively fingers eagerly turning over the pages of the books. The room in the hotel in the rue Favre was filled with piles of manuscripts and bales of books, some of which were brought in on Beyle's herculean shoulders. At that time there was a vogue for books of travel, descriptions of places and travel adventures. The dry studies on art by Inspector Mérimée sold like hot cakes.

"Owing to the lack of undiscovered countries the Romantics have begun to re-discover France," said Beyle when he met Mérimée. "I feel I want to respond to it."

And he did respond. He made an agreement with a publisher to tell the story of his travels in France and even received an advance of one thousand five hundred francs for a small travel sketch.

The "small travel sketch" grew into an extensive volume, but Beyle did not confine himself to this. Without taking any money from the publisher, he quickly offered him a second volume and then a third, all for the same price. The publisher took fright and they confined themselves to two volumes. Thus were published *Les Mémoires d'un Touriste*, the hero of which is our old acquaintance, the contractor for cotton nightcaps for the army, who once entered Madame Ancelot's drawing-room. Beyle puts him into a stage-coach and sends him travelling about the country which "fools call la belle France." The author disclaims all responsibility for the fact that this army contractor dares to speak the plain truth in his rough language. When he stops talking, an ironmonger turns up in the coach followed by his cousin. In the end it is a certain nameless commercial traveller who travels about France and discovers the secrets of the lives of the people of Marseilles, Bordeaux, Brittany, Normandy, in short of all the false and clumsy bourgeois living between Belgium and Spain. Having published these two volumes, Beyle immediately forgot about them.

They were published anonymously and were received with great indignation by the public. Mérimée flew into the hotel in the rue Favre in a fury and tapping a page of the book with a pencil, exclaimed: "Some scoundrel has simply robbed me! Here are sixteen pages without a single omission copied from my travels in the south of France."

"Eighteen," said Beyle.

Mérimée looked at him in astonishment. Then he tossed the book aside and burst out laughing.

"Clara, dear, I could not go everywhere in such a short space of time. It was not the Lombardy of 1820. I was younger then, and besides, the people there are better than in France. I knew that you would not mind, but what I fear is this: that monologue of the ironmonger I took from Millin's travels, I am afraid that Millin may write a denial on oath that he never dealt in iron."

"Well, as to that let me reassure you: Millin died two years ago."

"What luck!" exclaimed Beyle with a sigh of relief. "Tell me, what is happening in Paris?"

"It is very quiet in Paris. Last year the trial was concluded of the secret society 'The Times of the Year,' organized on the lines of the former Masonic organizations, and this year there have been eighteen political trials."

"It is the same in Italy," said Beyle. "The Ruffini brothers at Genoa and Romorino in Piedmont have been causing the Austrians a good deal of bother."

"In the newspapers they were simply called bandits," remarked Mérimée.

"You see how strong this fallacy is," said Beyle. "Bear in mind that in Italy there have been no bandits in our sense of the word. Almost all the so-called bandits, or brigands, are the republican opposition to the despotic manifestations of authority. It is amazing how the Papal gendarmes and the Austrian police manage to create the conditions which drive people into crime. But all the so-called criminals since the seventeenth century are welcomed in the villages. The authorities cannot capture them because the people are unwilling to give them away. In the archives of Italy I found direct evidence that the composers of the court chronicles and royal annals prostituted history. They sold themselves, and for a small price, to any duke. You can imagine what such a chronicler wrote to please his patron. He slandered hostile neighbours and muddled the pure water of popular indignation. In the secret records of the seventeenth century I read the answers at the trial of the so-called briganti. They are real political speeches."

"You completely upset the established view of history."

"My dear, you forget that for me there are no authorities."

"It is time you changed that point of view. In France authority is everything. The ability to give up truth for the sake of state discipline is the first condition of our success."

"Success will pass me by," said Beyle.

Prince Peter Andreyevich Viazemski asked how to get to room 177.

"It is on the fifth floor. Whom do you want?"

"I want Monsieur Beyle."

"Monsieur Beyle is not at home."

"But I thought I saw him enter this door just now."

"You merely thought so," replied the concierge stubbornly.

"But he himself asked me at Monsieur Molé's yesterday to come at this time."

"In that case will you please go up."

Viazemski tapped on the door. There was no answer. He tapped a second time. Again there was no answer. He knocked louder. He heard a chair being pushed aside and the sound of books tumbling on the floor. The door flew open. Before Viazemski stood the occupant of the room. He was tall and rather heavy. His bird-like eyes stared at Viazemski, who was standing in the semi-dark passage. His nostrils were crudely moulded. His side-whiskers disappeared under his chin. Beyle was like a kite that had been roused by sudden danger.

Viazemski took a step forward. Beyle recognized him and bowing his head, invited him into the room with a sweeping gesture. The evening before there had been some talk at Molé's about the unceasing attempts of Buonaparte's nephew, the son of Hortense, to start a movement among the troops in favour of a Buonapartist revolution. Beyle told all the anecdotes he knew about Duroc and the rest of Hortense's lovers who might be the father of this dangerous adventurer-pretender. The King of Holland had already recognized this lad as a Buonaparte, but they really did not know what to make of Hortense's next production. His name was Morny. He was a very dangerous rascal.

Before taking the armchair which his host offered him, Viazemski looked round the room. It was in great disorder. Over the table was a print of the Lombardy school, representing Herodias. The huge table was loaded with books and large albums of prints representing Napoleon's Italian campaign. A map of the battle of Waterloo was spread out on the floor by the window. On the window sill were views of the Kremlin, a portrait of Kutuzov and an engraving representing Marshal Ney. On a round table in a corner was a small old-fashioned telescope, a three-cornered hat with a plume and an old sword-hilt with the letter "N." Under the table lay books in parchment bindings and huge green portfolios. Sheets of blue paper filled with small close handwriting were scattered about the writing-table. On one of them Viazemski read:

ARRIGO BEYLE  
MILANESE  
Visse, scrisse, amo  
Quest'anima  
Adorava  
Cimarosa, Mozart e Shakespeare  
Mori di anni . . .  
Il . . . 18 . . .

"It doesn't look as though he will soon fill in the date of his death," thought Viazemski. "He is like a young man with those eyes of his and furious capacity for work without rest."

"Forgive me for not having heard you at once. I thought they were knocking next door. Of late I have been tied down by work for a specified time. I have collected a good deal of money and have to do enough work to cover twenty-five thousand francs."

"Oh, is it something very big, something about military life, like *Mina de Wangel*?"

"Have you read *Mina Wangel*?" asked Beyle.

"Yes, I read it and drew the conclusion that truth was dangerous for a woman."

"Well, how hard it is to expect the same interpretation. I know readers who drew conclusions about the danger of falsehood. But I had no intention whatsoever of writing a moral tale. I wanted to develop my previous theme that a woman who is endowed with exceptional powers of emotion cannot be understood by the Frenchmen of to-day."

"So you are writing something big?"

"Yes, I am living my young days over again. Tell me, how are the affairs of Nikolai Turgenev getting on?"

"He is a very persistent man," said Viazemski, "but I am afraid for the

fate of his brother. You noticed his unsettled state, his perpetual longing to change his place of residence? He is consumed with anxiety about his brother and in my opinion he won't live long. He is at present attending Mickiewicz's lecture. He has made it his purpose to dissuade that Polish crank from hating Russia."

"It seems there is every reason for such a sentiment," said Beyle and corrected himself, "at least in the hearts of the Poles."

Viazemski's visit was a very short one. Keeping his glove on his left hand and resting it on his stick as he held his top-hat, he looked once again at the writing-table, rose and politely said good-bye. Beyle locked the door and went on with his work. The novel was already finished, but one of the chapters had got mislaid in the piles of books, and to Beyle's great annoyance he had to rewrite it. All the pleasure that was connected with this novel, his only favourite into which he had put all his love of life, suddenly vanished because of the need to rewrite the last chapter but one.

There was a Charterhouse near Grenoble. There was also a Charterhouse to the south of Bologna. Why should it not be at Parma, why not make this most beautiful town of Italy the place where within the narrow horizon of mountains and valleys the finest experiences and the finest scenes of the most beautiful representatives of the finest people in the world unfold themselves? The novel was called *La Chartreuse de Parme* or *The Charterhouse of Parma*. Beyle transplanted into the soul of Fabrice del Dongo the freshest, most youthful impressions of his own life. Beyle was in love with his hero. The fifty-year-old Beyle in his attitude towards the Sanseverina, was more like Count Mosca, that strong, intelligent man capable of deep controlled emotion. Fabrice is merely the Sanseverina's nephew, and if the enthusiastic attitude of the young man is linked with the powerful disinterested love of the mature man for the heroine of the novel, she herself, this infinitely vital woman with her captivating mind, her swiftness and freshness of feeling, is not broken up into different images, but presented as a complete character, such as was Métilde of Milan who served as her model.

Under the yoke of Austria, conscious of the shame of their own family who had betrayed the interests of the country to the Austrian aggressors, lived the del Dongo family. The youngest son Fabrice—a charming, noble youth, who was destined for the priesthood, runs away from home and stumbles into the evening light of Napoleon's glory. The moment when others had finished and made their exit from history served Fabrice as the starting point of his heroism. He witnessed the sunset of a grim age and descended into the twilight of Italy. That country is the country of the finest youthful recollections.

At one time, young Beyle had witnessed the sudden awakening of the beautiful Italian city of Milan. It was in the month of June almost forty years ago. With the departure of the last Austrian regiment this gay and vital people suddenly realized that, after half a century of sleep, Catholic falsehood and political deception, man once again had the right to take risks, the right to happiness, the right to give his life for what he loved.

But how was one to describe the battle of Waterloo? How to describe this last battle of the nations with Napoleon who had escaped from Elba, when Beyle himself not only had not believed in the success of the Emperor's new attempt, but had not even stirred as he read his newspaper over an ice in the Café Florian in Venice? Once, having arrived at Koenigsberg, exhausted by the flight from Vilna and the retreat from Moscow, he learnt from a grey



scrap of a German newspaper that the battle of Borodino was one of the greatest battles in the world, whereas all the officers who had taken part in it told him that it was a frightful chaos, a skirmish of individual detachments, a clash of men brandishing their weapons in panic, shooting and stabbing one another with their bayonets. His own impressions likewise confirmed the view that for those taking part in it the battle was simply a savage and absurd scramble of men in bushes, on the outskirts of forests and in fields, torn up by invisible shells. This battle of Borodino should be used for the description of Waterloo. Beyle himself had seen Marshal Ney in action. He had also seen the lightning appearance of Napoleon when a small detachment shouted greetings and was instantly silent. All this was fairly prosaic. But the horrors of the battlefield, death and wounds, showed that the heroic reports of ambitious generals were one of the most repulsive forms of human falsehood. Once when Beyle was hungry he asked a soldier for a piece of bread. Fabrice likewise asks and meets with a sardonic contemptuous refusal. "These harsh words and the general laughter that followed them struck Fabrice like a thunderbolt. So war was not that noble uplifter of the souls of men who loved humour as Napoleon's proclamations had led him to believe."

This superior understanding of reality, shorn of falsehood and affectation, peeps out in every line of the novel. Beyle read over what he had written and stopped at times. "Yes, this is good, this really comes off," he thought. "But I shall not be fully appreciated for another hundred years."

Having turned over a page of *Souvenirs d'Egotisme*, he jotted down a note about his distant reader of the future, and he felt better. The adventures and prisons of Fabrice, the loves and intrigues of the little Italian court, the life of the principality ruled by a despot who had once hanged the Carbonari and was afraid of everything ever since, filled Stendhal with enthusiasm. Was the nature of the present government made plain enough? Was the difference between the Italian and the French character sufficiently stressed? Likewise the decline of revolutionary energy in France and the irrepressible aspiration for freedom in Italy? Had he portrayed with sufficient clearness the Austrian intrigue, which divided the Italian nation up into the tiny monarchies, which formed the net of the police absolutism of Austria?

"Yes, it is well done," said Beyle to himself. "All the strata of Italian society speak their own language, and the basic idea that the mania of servility will not outlast the present century emphasizes best of all my attitude to authority in general. There is less and less fear in the people. Man is believing more and more in himself. Each new group that gives a new turn to history is broader than the last. And so it will go on until this broadening applies to man as a whole. Already the sceptical attitude towards the self-complacency of the ruling power has greatly undermined its authority. People have taken to ridicule, and where there is laughter there is life and progress. It was not for nothing that I wrote that genuine comedy was impossible among the French of 1836, when the King himself preached a false piety, and the Court and the bankers put on a Lenten face, at the same time passing on to the Stock Exchange information from the secret papers of the Ministry, which immediately sent up the shares bought by the King under an assumed name. Now they no longer write 'by the grace of God'; the time will soon come when even the words 'by the will of the people' will be re-examined."

## CHAPTER FIFTY

BY THE END OF 1839, BLANQUI, BARBÈS AND BERNARD—THE FOLLOWERS OF THE Communist Babeuf and the friends of Buonarrotti—had completely re-established the old Masonic conspiracy under the guise of the "Times of the Year" society.

On 12th May, 1839, the King and the police were at the races in the country. In the morning, the "Times of the Year" seized the arsenals, occupied a police post and the Hôtel de Ville. Blanqui was proclaimed commander-in-chief and a Provisional Government was appointed. But there was no liaison with the factories. The rebels were dispersed by the city police and the fire of the National Guards. Seventeen men were handed over to the tribunal of the Chamber of Peers. Barbès and Blanqui were sentenced to death. The newspaper *Le National* came out with a demand for universal suffrage. The frightened Paris bankers tried to curtail even the suffrage rights of the middle class. The Ministry was frightened, the King was displeased. In March the Minister, Molé, resigned. At the first performance of his play *Esmeralda* Victor Hugo was informed that Barbès had been sentenced to death. He went into the King's box and begged him in verse to pardon Barbès. Louis Philippe sent him a note: "I give him his life, but it must be snatched from the hands of my Ministers." The Ministers dug in their toes, but the affair ended by Barbès and Blanqui being imprisoned for life. Subsequent events caused the imprisonment to be short-lived.

With the departure of Molé the officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs had every opportunity to settle accounts with the recalcitrant Consul. Two fine books had just appeared in the windows of the Paris bookshops—*La Chartreuse de Parme*, a big novel, a brilliant chronicle of contemporary Italy, and *L'Abbesse de Castro*, an old chronicle written in defence of the youth of Italy who fought for freedom in the seventeenth century. Both books were hymns of praise to Italy. Nevertheless the Apennine Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Paris severely reprimanded the Consul who was living in Paris. "What if he is a connoisseur of Italy, who has addressed to Molé the best political reports on the North, the South and Romagna? What if he is the author of brilliant chronicles and remarkable novels? We need the efficient official Beyle, and we have nothing to do with the writer Stendhal."

In the hottest days of June the mail-coaches wound along the dusty roads, carrying a sullen passenger exhausted by immense toil. He was too exhausted even to think; he gazed out of the windows at the road, the valleys and mountains, planted with vineyards, at the olive groves, the highways running straight as an arrow across the fields of rice, at the roads of the Roman villages, where one came across tombs at every step, where brightly painted statues of the Madonna stood at every turning, where crosses and the inscriptions "Signor mio, Dio mio" were cut in the rocks and in the most remote places. All this was familiar to Beyle, and it seemed to him as though he had already lived a thousand lives.

On 9th August, 1839, looking out at the sea from the window of his consular room, he sealed up in an envelope the following letter: "To Monsieur le Maréchal Soult, Minister of Foreign Affairs of France, Paris.

Civita Vecchia, 10th August, 1839.

Monsieur le Ministre, In accordance with Your Excellency's orders, I have resumed the consular work at Civita Vecchia to-day 10th August.

According to the time-table of the mail-coaches I should have arrived sooner, but I was delayed on the way by gout attacks, first at Genoa and then at Leghorn. I beg you to receive, Monsieur le Ministre, the expression of my entire devotion.

HENRI BEYLE, Consul.

How many times in this same armchair, at this same writing-table, had he repeated this gesture of unfolding a paper and gumming an envelope, but for some reason or other he now recalled with particular keenness his angry note to the Ministry requesting a transfer to Spain. Then the ink-stand had stood there in just the same way, and the pens had lain like that, and his hand, having picked up the code in which the novel *Le Rouge et le Blanc* was written, instead of removing it from the table, had put it mechanically into the envelope. The solution of the whole affair was quite simple. There had been no loss or theft, only his own absentmindedness, but it was inconvenient to start a correspondence on the subject, and "if I am ever in Paris . . ." "Why do I express this in the form of a conditional proposition?" reflected Beyle. "Of course I shall be in Paris, of course I shall find the code. But it is better not to think about it at present."

He went out into the inner yard of the Consulate. Bunches of grapes were hanging from the high neglected fence embowered in vine leaves. An Italian urchin was feeding the fat pigeons. Lysimaque, puffing out his chest like a cockerel, was contemplating his kingdom with his hands in his pockets. The cook and a peasant woman with a basket stood in front of him like hens before Chanticleer. "Oho!" thought Beyle. "He is puffing out his chest, he is already getting it ready to be decorated. The presentation has already taken place. And why not?"

"*Au revoir*, Lysimaque," he said aloud, and went on foot to the station of the "Diligenze Veloci"—fast diligences.

The new head of the coach-horse yard, not knowing Beyle, asked him for his documents. Fortunately he had them on him. *Fu pagato per un posto nell'interno della carrozza* (payment has been made for a seat inside the coach). Nine hours later he was in Rome. He put up at No. 43, Via Condotti. Then, in the cool of the quiet evening, he sauntered about the Piazza di Spagna, ascended the steps to the church of Trinità de' Monti and went to see Abraham Constantin.

In Rome he renewed his former connections. His old friends were glad to see him again. Constantin made a request to him. At the suggestion of Monsieur Vieusseux he had written a book called *The Thoughts of an Italian on Modern Painting*, but his language was appalling. So in the mornings they began to correct the proofs. At first the phrases were changed, then the ideas were supplemented and finally the new ideas turned out to be so fresh and bright that Constantin's ideas appeared quite dull. The author rejected them in a fury and wanted to start the book all over again. Vieusseux protested that they would ruin him. The book would have to be set up again. A battle began and it ended in the complete victory of Beyle and Constantin. A new book belonging to two authors came out.

*La Vie de Henri Brûlard* would anyhow not be finished; the shortness of breath to which he was frequently subject and headaches indicated that he could not go on working on it even up to the day before his death. At any rate, some provision for it must be made.

Beyle wrote: "I bequeath and give this book to Abraham Constantin, native of Geneva, painter on porcelain. In the event of Constantin not printing this book within one thousand days from the day of my death, I desire it to pass to the following persons: firstly, to Alphonse Levavasseur, publisher (Place Vendôme, 7); secondly, to Philarète Chasles, littérateur; thirdly, to André Fournier, publisher; fourthly, to Paulin, publisher, and fifthly, to Delaunay, publisher. And if it should so happen that none of these persons can publish the book within five years after my death, I bequeath this book to the oldest of all the publishers living in London, on condition that his name begins with the letter 'C.' "

Beyle had in mind Colburn, who paid rather badly and irregularly, but had a high opinion of Monsieur Stendhal and published his books in beautiful editions without mentioning the name of the author. French journalists translated the beautiful English prose into Monsieur Stendhal's native language. The translations were eagerly printed, whereas the originals were rejected by the French journals.

While preparing *Les Mémoires d'un Touriste*, Beyle paid a visit to Grenoble. He spent only one day there and that was fruitless, as once before when he came about Pauline's affairs. However, the history of these places interested him. His father had once bought an estate at St. Ismier. Living at Civita Vecchia, he again set to work on a French theme, more from ennui than seriously. He re-read the rough draft of the novel *Lamiel* and decided not to go on with it, but the story of *Le Chevalier de St. Ismier* seemed to promise well.

October came. The weather changed. In Rome it was cold, but there was a fireplace in the room. It was almost the only room with a fireplace in Rome, and now, in contrast to former years, Beyle noticed with surprise that he could not do without a foot-warmer or a fire. When his feet got cold his eyelids swelled, his eyes smarted and his head began to ache. On one of these days the post, passing by Civita Vecchia, dropped at the French Embassy some copies of the *Revue Parisienne*, published by Balzac. This famous writer, this mighty creator of novels moulded out of bronze, had not written a mere review, but a long rapturous article on *La Chartreuse de Parme*, seventeen whole pages of it. Beyle was in a state of tumultuous joy. He sat in the chancellery of the Embassy with an ebony paper knife, cutting page after page and devouring them without being able to tear himself away. This was belated fame, belated appreciation. Balzac said frankly that *La Chartreuse de Parme* was the greatest work of the age. It was impossible not to agree with him in those places in which he took the author to task for his defects of language and style. It was clear that a man who seeks for the idea that is the most true does not always rise to the height of the aesthetic demands of a stylist. Balzac himself is reproached with littering the language of novels with numerous scientific terms, new words and new concepts.

The secretary of the Embassy politely placed before Beyle, while he was reading, two letters—one from Mérimée and the other from Balzac. Mérimée asked him to go to Naples, whence he was about to set out on a trip to the East.

## CHAPTER FIFTY-ONE

### BEYLE SUFFERED ATTACKS OF EXTREME IRRITABILITY.

A circular note came from Rome addressed to all the Consulates of the coastal towns of the Papal States. The gist of it was that it was necessary to

curtail the number of travellers and tourists. Now it was quite absurd to ask the consul to diminish in all countries the number of idlers, enthusiasts, artists, writers and merchants, who wanted to visit Italy. Beyle wrote: "As for the orders from Rome, it would be useless to have any illusions: travellers and communications are always regarded as occasions of moral corruption. Thus, although the 12,000 travellers who pass through the port of Civita Vecchia each year enrich the town, it is preferred that there should be no steamships, and everything that tends to facilitate navigation is regarded with disfavour."

After dispatching the letter, Beyle went off to Naples. The three weeks which he spent with Prosper Mérimée passed like a single day. They went to Pompeii, Sorrento, Cape Miseno, Amalfi and ascended to Ravello via Atrani. Gazing at the sparkling, dazzling, infinitely peaceful sea, Mérimée screwed up his eyes and listened while Beyle related the history of this ancient robbers' nest on a lofty crag, where Arab merchants took the place of the Norman vikings and where each people had left its dwellings. Ascending from Amalfi through the village of Atrani to the mountain where Ravello is situated, Mérimée noticed the assurance with which Beyle found his way about this labyrinth. At first they went along the rocky bed of a dried-up rivulet, then found themselves in a narrow space between some houses which indicated a street. Then they came into a blind alley and moving aside the hanging washing, entered somebody's house. Babies were crawling about the floor. A black-haired Neapolitan with a pipe nodded his head to Beyle as an old acquaintance. Coming out, they entered a narrow side-street, went up eleven steps and again entered somebody's house. And so it went on till they got to the end of the village.

It seemed to Mérimée that in spite of his thirty-seven years he was far more tired than fifty-seven-year-old Beyle.

"If I were not so old, I should be anxious about my condition," said Beyle. "At one moment it seemed to me that it was winter and that I was walking along the Vilna passages through the hovels of the Jewish quarter, and the clever scout and smuggler Olivieri was rescuing me from the Cossacks who were pursuing me."

Only then did Mérimée notice his friend's unusual pallor. They sat down on a rock and took a long rest. At Salerno they halted in the village. Beyle noticed with curiosity how different his friend was. Mérimée felt better and more at ease among the Italian peasants than in a Paris hotel. This was strange for a man of Mérimée's type.

"Tell me about your trip to Corsica," said Beyle.

"The most interesting experience I had was meeting the families of Bartoli and Rocassera at Sartena. These are two hostile families, almost like the Montagues and Capulets, but without any romantic intrigue. I lived at Bartoli's. His daughter is an amazing girl, and I had a hard task to keep my heart intact."

"And she?" asked Beyle.

"She seemed to have remained indifferent. I saw a remarkable piece of shooting while I was there. My friend Rocassera with a couple of shots from an English double-barrelled gun in the twinkling of an eye killed two of his enemies on the spot and fled into the maquis—the scrub-land in the heart of the island. The law of Teodoro Pola still prevails there, the unwritten constitution of the Corsican bandits, who impose their will on the towns and villages and whom it is impossible to fight. They are even obeyed by the caporali, that is, the chiefs of the detachments fighting for the freedom of Corsica. I

rode with a young man—the son of Caterina Bartoli. He graduated from the university and served in the French army, but a month after his arrival he became a perfect Corsican again. I visited the so-called *sottano*, in the lower tiers of Sartena, and above, in the so-called *soprano*—the upper passages and crevices—was the house of their opponents. It was like armed fortresses. I wrote a story.”

Mérimée told him the contents of the story *Colomba*.

“I would advise you not to give away any secrets in your story. Don’t forget that such things do not pass without consequences.”

Mérimée paid no attention to these words, but a year later he appreciated them. The Corsicans treated Mérimée’s story as the impartial testimony of a witness. In consequence brave Rocassera, who had so much delighted Prosper Mérimée with his successful shooting, fell a victim of the vendetta, and when the gendarmes brought his body to Sartena, the old uncle of the youths he had killed opened the shutters, which had not been opened for a year as a sign of mourning, shaved off the beard he had let grow and walked triumphantly along the street with Prosper Mérimée’s story under his arm.

Vesuvius was raging. Torrents of lava ran down the crater and destroyed the vineyards. Mérimée and Beyle went towards the lava.

“Is not the volcano on which you are living enough for you?” asked Mérimée. “Italy with its perpetual risings and incessant underground activity reminds me of this mountain.”

“I don’t think that present-day Paris is very much quieter. It is likewise a fire-breathing mountain and I am convinced that in the not distant future France will experience a colossal civil war. Anyway I should regard it as far more rational than all the external wars which are now being fought.”

“I must admit to you,” said Mérimée, “that the nature of civil war interests me very much. During last year I studied most of all the Latin records of the social war and the conspiracy of Catiline. At bottom, a political regime is the reflection of different social relations, and it may be that material factors play the primary role in politics.”

“That is the opinion of Barnave,” said Beyle. “He proved that the nature of a regime depends entirely on the form of ownership. What is the present parody of a constitution in France? It is a set of representatives of two hundred thousand bourgeois who call themselves the legal country, but all the real France of thirty millions takes no part in the life of this parliamentary talking shop. Consequently it is an illegal country and must draw conclusions from its illegality.”

“Nevertheless I think that a strong monarchical regime could balance the position,” said Mérimée.

“You are looking backward, not forward. What was suitable a hundred years ago is to-day simply impossible. The only thing that the Paris bankers can do is to organize a special selection of troops and make their General dictator.”

“It is all the same to me,” said Mérimée.

Beyle said nothing. He looked at this young man, who was full of life, had a thousand plans and was about to leave for the East, and all of a sudden he realized that he was capitulating to time, that precisely this difference of twenty years placed a gulf between him and Mérimée; at the same time he felt that he was right.

“He is a man of another generation who will never understand me,” he thought.

Tired, he spoke in a slightly hoarse voice; he said that his nerves were on edge, that his irritability had reached the extreme limit; he always understood more than he talked, and that he only refrained from talking so as not to give way to his feelings.

"As I was in my youth, so I remain to-day," he said.

"But you are still young," said Mérimée. "Old age is still a long way off."

In Naples they walked along the via di Constantinopoli, rummaging for hours on the shelves of the second-hand booksellers. Mérimée bought all the old and new erotic books in various languages. Among them were *Le Paysan Pervers* of Restif de la Bretonne and a London edition of a pamphlet about a satanic woman which rumour attributed to Alfred de Musset after he had left George Sand. Beyle with a smile watched the enthusiasm of his young friend. He himself bought two books, for which he had hardly enough money. One of them was a very rare manuscript of Neapolitan chronicles, in which he was struck by the story of Sister Scholastica. The other was a small, exceedingly rare book of Caracciolo called *The Chronicles of the Convent of Baiano*.

After Mérimée's departure Beyle worked on the story of Baiano. The result was a beautiful tale, one of his most successful. He gave it the provisional name *Trop de Faveur Tue*.

It was interrupted by lengthy dispatches which arrived from Paris. The diplomatic summaries, which informed the consuls better than the newspapers informed the general public, reported the state of the so-called eastern question, which was something new to Europe. Since the time of the Greek war of independence, when the combined squadrons of Russia, France and England attacked the Turkish fleet in 1827 and destroyed it at Navarino, great changes had taken place on the political chessboard of Europe. After the Russo-Turkish war the influence of Nicholas I on the affairs of the Balkans increased to such an extent that the European Powers were seriously afraid of "Russian aggression." So Nicholas I, from being the enemy, became the guardian of the Sultan of Turkey. In 1833 Egypt, Syria and Palestine wanted to get rid of the Turkish system and shake off the authority of the Sultan. Nicholas I sent Russian troops to the aid of the Turks, and the hope of independence of Egypt and Palestine was thwarted by the "caprice" of the Moscow autocrat. There were subtle calculations in this "caprice." A struggle for markets for cheap Russian corn was going on. At Unkiar-Skelessi the grateful Sultan made a treaty with Nicholas to close the straits to all foreign ships whenever requested to do so by Russia. Mehemet Ali, the leader of the Syrian and Egyptian movement, acknowledged himself under Russian pressure to be an hereditary vassal of the Sultan of Turkey. The French Stock Exchange was no less interested in the eastern markets than were other Powers, and when in 1839 Mehemet Ali started another insurrection, again first Russia and England and then Austria and Prussia declared themselves in favour of the authority of the Sultan of Turkey. But France came out on the side of Mehemet Ali. Admiral Lalanne handed over to Mehemet Ali the Turkish fleet captured by the French. French officers became the instructors of the Egyptian army. The question arose of the predominance of French influence in Syria and Palestine, which was to the disadvantage of England. The French were invited to renounce their patronage of Mehemet Ali. The matter had already gone too far; for France to retreat was tantamount to acknowledging that her protection was an unprincipled adventure. Louis Philippe and the French Bourse took this path. Beyle

read with indignation one dispatch after the other, scandalized at the thought that he was in the service of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and that he belonged indirectly to French officialdom, which was implicated in the indecent eastern adventure. But when the news came of the shooting of the inhabitants of Beirut and that the Turks, egged on by the Tsar of Russia, were beating up the Palestinian Jews with the tacit connivance of the Syrian Consul, on whose doors the persecuted families knocked in vain, Beyle was absolutely furious. Nobody had ever seen him like this before. After reading the dispatch, he summoned all the employees of the Consulate and the representatives of the embassy chancellery who were at Civita Vecchia, and in spite of the presence of the Russian Consul, shouted as he thumped the table with his fists that no honest Frenchman could tolerate such a disgrace, that only the savage northern country of the Tsars could allow such violence against nationalities and that as long as there were such Consuls as the French Consul at Damascus, he, Beyle, could not have any peace. Lysimaque, looking at the Russian Consul Aratta, who was blinking his big eyes as though not understanding what it was all about, tried to put in his word.

"Monsieur le Consul, is it right to forget that you are a subject of His Majesty?"

"It is not your business to talk to me about that. I announce that from this day and from this hour I give up French citizenship and am no longer one of His Majesty's subjects. I ask you, or rather I order you, to draw up the requisite statement to the Ministry."

So saying he banged the door and went out. An hour later Lysimaque tapped timidly on his door.

"Is this all right?" he asked, presenting the rough draft of the letter and fearing lest Beyle should renounce his intention.

"It is no good at all," said Beyle after reading it. He tore up the sheet of paper and threw the pieces away. Then he took a pen and himself wrote a sharp protest that left no doubt whatever, and a statement relinquishing his French citizenship.

Lysimaque did not venture to interfere. He did not even venture to write to Paris. At first he rubbed his hands, but a week later, seeing Beyle's face calm and composed, began to think that he had overlooked something in taking his master for a man of little importance. "Either he has high protection or he is playing nap, but obviously there is something I don't quite understand."

He was completely nonplussed when a month later a semi-official communication addressed to Beyle came from the Ministry, stating that Monsieur Beyle was permitted to relinquish French citizenship and be naturalized in any urban community of Italy, but at the same time the Ministry humbly requested Monsieur Beyle not to give up the title of French Consul. Lysimaque went about quite bewildered.

There arrived at Civita Vecchia a German Italian, or an Italian German, the young pink-cheeked artist Sodermark. He came to make the acquaintance of the famous European writer, whose novel *La Chartreuse de Parme* had given him the happiest moments of his life. Beyle paid him a return visit, and in the course of the month Sodermark painted his portrait, which Beyle thought excellent and a very good likeness.

The year 1841 arrived. The spring came, everything was in bloom, in the month of March began the migration of the birds to the north. Whole days at a time, in spite of the heat and wind, Beyle would walk along the sea shore



in jack-boots and a hunting jacket. Thousands of birds flew across the deep blue of the Mediterranean sky. The waves lapped the sandy shore. The sun shone wearily. Resounding shots broke the sunny quiet of the rank vegetation along the shore. Shot quails fell on the sand. There was already a whole heap of them. The dog, shaking sprays of sea water from his coat, retrieved the birds which fell at a distance from the shore. Beyle enthusiastically loaded his gun with small shot and brought down, at a great height, a bird that was tired after the long flight from the coast of Africa. For him this shooting was a delightful occupation, that went on for whole days. Beyle's cheeks were reddened by the sea breeze, his face was sunburnt, the pupils of his eyes were brightened. He became like a mythical inhabitant of the ancient Latin forests. The girl Vidau with a pitcher of fresh water on her shoulder gazed in amazement as the elderly Consul brought down bird after bird with scarcely ever a miss. This Frenchman was an excellent shot. He shot like the mountain shepherds of Romagna. One would not have thought that he had spent his life writing books.

"Monsieur Beyle, you will get a sunstroke. Look how red your eyes are."

"Yes, indeed," said Beyle, "it is time to go."

After a fortnight's shooting he found he was sleeping badly. He went to Rome and had a talk with a doctor. The old man shook his head and ordered him to give up shooting. On the way from the doctor in the via Condotti he encountered Ingres—the new director of the French Academy in Rome, who had taken the place of Horace Vernet.

"I can imagine how my predecessor feels in Algiers," said Ingres. "The artist is to immortalize the honour of French arms, but how can one immortalize what France has lost? Do you know that the behaviour of the French high command in Algiers is downright dishonourable?"

"I know, I know," said Beyle. "Take me to the exhibition at your place."

They went to the Villa Medici. Ingres led Beyle from one exhibit to another. They went up to a small marble Cupid, who was gazing sadly at his broken wing. Beyle stopped and suddenly realized that the crown of his head was getting cold and his temples were throbbing. Turning to Ingres and gesticulating, he tried in vain to say something, but was unable to utter more than a couple of words: "*Me voilà . . .*" Then the sensation of cold in the crown of the head gave place to a great heat. The blood rushed to his face, his sight became blurred and the room began to go round and round.

To Monsieur di Fiore, Paris.

Rome, Monday, 19th April, 1841.

Yesterday they put an issue on my left arm. This morning I was bled. The most unpleasant symptom is an impediment in the tongue which makes me stutter.

The excellent Constantin comes to see me twice a day. M. Allery, of Aix-la-Chapelle, the Pope's doctor, comes to see me. Constantin gilds for me the pill which is not too bitter. I hope soon to get better. But I want to bid you good-bye in case this should be the last. I really love you and there are not many such.

Adieu, take events cheerfully.

CONDOTTI 48.

20th April, an attack of weakness in the left leg and thigh.  
Going on well 21st April.

Doctor Prévost, a gout specialist living at Geneva, did not agree with Beyle's views. If the morning after drinking champagne Monsieur Beyle's nerves were calmer, the symptoms of the disease appeared more clearly. He was right not to drink coffee. But the best thing he could do would be to come to Geneva for a thorough medical examination.

In Rome Constantin took good care of him. He looked after Beyle like a child, and that old heavy giant of a woman Barbara showed so much solicitude that she even stole Beyle's second pair of boots. This would have been a mere trifle, but the doctor ordered a third blood-letting. Beyle's head felt fresher, but his legs had almost lost the power of movement. Worst of all he was unable to find certain words. He had to strive for half an hour to remember the name of the transparent liquid in a glass, which quenched his thirst and which could be found in any well. Sometimes his tongue swelled up to such an extent that it filled his mouth. Instead of words he made a sound like lowing.

There were unpleasant incidents. The French ship *Pollux* collided with the Italian *Mongibello* and sank it. There would be lengthy investigations. Beyle would have to go out to the spot, make inquiries, quarrel with that rogue Romanelli, the harbour-master, and look eleven devils of Italian sailors in the eyes, who would persist on oath that these Frenchmen were to blame always and for everything. On 22nd October he left Civita Vecchia on leave. In November he was at Geneva. He wanted to go and visit Rousseau's house, as he had done when as a lad he had come to Geneva to look for tracks of Buonaparte's reserve army of Dijon. That was forty years ago. And the first thing he did was to visit Rousseau's house. Doctor Prévost shook his head: "No Rousseaus—you must lie in bed."

On 8th November Beyle was in Paris.

"If it has ever happened to you—and it has often happened to me—to go in a steamship down the Rhône, you will have seen how the steamship approaches Pont du Saint Esprit near Avignon. The heart is gripped with fear. With the wind on the river it is impossible to go up close. In peaceful weather the steamships pass under the bridge. Another moment and it seems that the steamship will catch the low arch or hit the buttresses; the moment is past and with a backwash and clouds of black smoke, the steamship is already beyond the bridge. Such a bridge is death. A heavy and unpleasant event. No rebellion is of any avail. It must come and when it comes there is complete nothingness, in which there is no place for regret for the life that has vanished. One ought not to fear this. In the end, one should not hide one's condition from one's self. There is nothing ridiculous in the fact that I may die in the street."

He jotted down these thoughts and went to Virginie Ancelot. That dear Turgenev was there again.

"Recently, when I was shooting quail flying from Africa to your snowy country, I sent a curse to your land of slaves with the surviving quails. When at last will Monsieur Nikolai Turgenev be able to go there? Will your peasantry ever be emancipated?"

*Diary of A. I. Turgenev.*

"10th November, 1841. Went from Countess Razumovski to the Ancelots. Beyle was there. He has grown old, but still endeavours to be witty.

"23rd March, 1842. Hurried to the Ancelots to find out about the death of Beyle. On the way from the café to the theatre, in the boulevard. Recently? And without having repented of his sins and mockery!"

Beyle was still working in the day-time, in spite of the prohibition of the doctors. He was rewriting the preface to the chronicle *Sister Scholastica*, which nevertheless remained unfinished.

On 22nd March, at seven o'clock in the evening, he had a stroke and fell down outside the door of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the rue Neuve des Capucines. At two o'clock in the morning, without regaining consciousness, he passed away without saying anything and without appearing to suffer.

A day went by without any intervention on the part of the clergy. Next morning Mérimée and Colomb walked behind the coffin. Then the French newspapers, having forgotten Balzac's article, published a brief report that the funeral had taken place at the cemetery of Montmartre of the little-known German poet Frédéric Styndall. All talk of Stendhal died down for a long time. A black consular box arrived in Paris from Italy. Having opened it, Mérimée and Colomb began to sort out the manuscripts of their departed friend.

THE END



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